A STUDY OF AMERICAN LOCAL LEGENDS FOR CHILDREN'S THEATRE

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By

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A THESIS

Submitted to the College of Communication Arts of Michigan
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AN ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

The problem of this study was to select American local legends that would be suitable for dramatic transference to children's theatre. In order to select wisely it was necessary to make a survey of all authority-approved children's plays and to determine the criteria already established for good children's drama. Further, an understanding of valid American folklore collecting had to be gained in order to make as thorough a coverage of American local legends as possible. This thesis is a presentation of the local legends that have been analyzed and appear to suit the criteria established for transference of story to plot for children's plays.

Chapter One contains the establishment of a need for new children's plays, plus the value of a study of American local legends for this area. Those workers who are accepted as leaders of the children's theatre field were approached as to their ideas on the need for new dramas; all answered that there was such a demand. Some added that a survey of the American folklore area would be a contribution to the field. A study of the full-length children's plays offered by leading dramatic publishing companies revealed that apparently only two local legends have been developed to play form.

In Chapter Two a comprehensive study was made of the requirements of good children's plays, and a list of criteria was set up from which all local legends would be judged.

An attempt was made in Chapter Three to define valid folklore and, more specifically, the local legend. Reasons were given for the choice of a study of local legends rather than other fields of folklore. The conclusion of the chapter presented the method by which the legends would be listed, explaining that another writer might have selected an entirely different list and means by which the material could be presented.

Chapter Four commences with the summaries of the chosen American local legends for possible transference to dramatic form. Proceeding from this point, three scenarios are included which are a development of three legends suggested in the beginning of the chapter. The scenarios, with explanations of the problems the legends presented, are offered as only one means by which a playwright might approach the transference of a basic legend to drama.

The final chapter is a summary of the study, plus an evaluation of the possibilities inherent for the playwright. Suggestions are given for further study of potential dramatic material.

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CHAPTER I

THE NEED FOR FRESH MATERIALS IN PLAYS FOR CHILDREN'S THEATRE

The increasing demand for new children's plays has made it necessary to explore new sources for story material. Directors in the children's theatre field have been experimenting with the trouping of children's plays, writing plays drawn from regional material, designing special unit sets for children's theatre use, and introducing child audiences to the realm of the dance. Such a state of experimentation has produced the need for a vast number of new dramas, but the playwrights have not been able to satisfy the demand. Children's theatre publishing companies have devised lists of authority-approved plays for child audiences; many dramas have been excluded from the lists because of their ineffective writing, the production difficulties entailed in their presentation, and their failure to meet the criteria for effective children's plays. From a study of the lists of plays it would appear that the playwright has utilized only certain sources of subject matter.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore American local legends in the hope of finding regional material that would be worthy of dramatic development. From the list of legends selected, American children's theatre dramatists could choose stories to develop into plots that would both entertain and train boys and girls for good drama.

In speaking of children's theatre the author will be referring to written plays, presented by living actors for child audiences. The players may be adults, children, or a combination of the two.[1] Only those plays considered to be of full-length for children's theatre, from one hour and one-half to one hour and three-quarters, will be reviewed. It is felt that the dramas which may be written as a result of this study should introduce children to the folklore of the past, the heroes of history, and the ideals of human behavior. Winifred Ward, co-founder of the Children's Theatre Conference, urged that drama

> . . . must be made a vital force in the lives of our boys and girls if we are to build an American theatre which will endure.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> If the children's theatres of this country, by presenting only superior plays, can develop in the boys and girls who will be the adult audiences of to-morrow a more discriminating taste in drama than their parents have, they will have made a distinct contribution to American life.[2]

Directors of the movement recognize that dramatizations of old and beloved stories, such as Snow White, Tom Sawyer, and Cinderella, are the most popularly attended at children's theatres. They agree that the first dramas offered in a new neighborhood should belong to this category and should continue to be included in each year's program. The director, however, soon begins introducing his young audience to

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[1] Definitions Committee of the Children's Theatre Conference (Ann Viola, Chairman), DRAMA WITH AND FOR CHILDREN: An Interpretation of Terms, 1955, p. 1.

[2] Winifred Ward, Theatre for Children, Revised edition (Anchorage, Kentucky: The Children's Theatre Press, 1950), pp. 38-9.

new and unfamiliar plays, being sure to publicize them well. Many authorities believe that the child audience will more readily accept the unfamiliar story, as it unfolds, since children often become restless or upset if a traditional story, one they know well, does not progress as they feel it should. Charlotte Chorpenning, a leading children's playwright, believed that there is a continual need for new dramatizations and expressed the idea that, since a child's experience is limited, many experiences that might of necessity be postponed for years might become a reality to him in an hour and half long performance.[3]

Although little has been published for children's theatres on regional drama, authorities have advocated the use of European and Asiatic folklore for child audiences. Miss Ward, in speaking of these traditional stories of folklore, said, "If we discard this great folk literature it is because we find that other authors before us have dramatized it so well that there is no reason for our attempting to do so."[4] Miss Ward believes that good folktales are well worth the dramatizing. Because our country is so young, the people have not had time to develop traditional stories; yet, David MacRitchie, a renowned international folklorist of the early twentieth century, argues that folklore, which embodies traditional and recently developed stories, has historical value for children:

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[3] Charlotte Chorpenning, Twenty-one Years with Children's Theatre (Anchorage, Kentucky: The Children's Theatre Press, 1954), pp. 52-3.

[4] Ward, op. cit., p. 64.

> Folk-lore in one of its aspects is history; and conversely that every account professing to be historical, but not written immediately after the occurrence of the events chronicled, is in a measure folk-lore.[5]

One of the leading exponents of regional drama today is Robert Gard, author of Grassroots Theater and Professor of Drama at the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Gard has spent most of his life in furthering drama of the people, written about and performed by the people in their own areas. During Mr. Gard's first years at the University of Wisconsin, Professor A. M. Drummond, an exponent of New York State regional drama, wrote him:

> I think our best literature is in a true sense regional, and our greatest American writers and dramatists have done their richest work when they were rising from or returning to their native heath, folkways and sentiments.[6]

Collectors of American folklore are endeavoring to preserve in print as much as can be recorded about individual customs, tales, beliefs, legends, and music. With the rapid change in our manner of living, folk are increasingly losing their former mannerisms and points of individuality--the American is becoming a conformist, through the influence of television, movies, and other modes of communication. Soon there will be no typical Arkansan, Maine fisherman, Frontier backwoodsman, or North Woods lumberjack. Children will mature with little idea of the background from which this country grew; they will lack appreciation for the regional traits and attitudes that have formed these United States.

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[5] David MacRitchie, "The Historical Aspect of Folk-Lore," Papers and Transactions of the International Folk-Lore Congress, edited by Joseph Jacobs and Alfred Nutt, London, 1892, p. 103.

[6] Letter to Robert Gard from Professor Drummond, Grassroots Theater (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1955), p. 17.

The traditional stories, referred to by Miss Ward as folklore, have been sifted through the centuries until they have become refined versions for children. This process is what could be followed with American folktales. Much of what scientific folklorists have amassed would be impractical for dramatization or too bloodthirsty, frightening, or vulgar for young people to see and hear.

> The fine qualities far outweigh the poor ones, and the undesirable incidents are in most cases extraneous to the plot itself, perhaps added by some injudicious storyteller through whose hands the story passed . . . .Good, childlike versions of the best of these tales can be found and they are valuable additions to children's literature. These tales embody American ideals of courage and the will to overcome incredible obstacles, oftentimes with a song and a laugh at the dangers that threaten. Helpfulness to others and cooperation are in these stories; even in the humorous exaggerations, there are desire and achievement in improving conditions of working and living together.[7]

Before choosing the topic of this thesis, the author attempted to ascertain if a study of American local legends would be considered a contribution to the children's theatre field. A perusal of leading dramatic publishing companies' play titles was made; there are two three-act plays, recognized by children's theatre leaders, which are based on American local legends: (1) Rip Van Winkle and (2) Captain Kidd's Treasure. Further investigation was pursued by correspondence with leading authorities, all of whom expressed the need for new well-written children's theatre plays and their interest in the topic selected. Miss Anne Matlack, of Denver's Junior Entertainment, Inc., wrote, "We need fresh material for children's plays, and I hope you

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[7] Miriam Blanton Huber, ed., Story and Verse for Children, Revised edition (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 317.

will be able to find it and make it available to all of us who are interested in better scripts for children."[8] Miss Ward said, "If you are able to find even a few very good legends for children's theatre it will be worthwhile."[9] Kenneth Graham, Associate Professor of the University of Minnesota, Department of Speech and Theatre Arts, thought the subject would be valuable "if you can actually locate local legends suitable for Children's Theatre."[10] A prominent children's theatre playwright, Aurand Harris, concluded his reaction to the topic with this comment: "There is a pressing need for an authentic listing and where available of American Legends which can be dramatized for children."[11] Dr. Graham adds, "To my knowledge there has been no such writing for Children's Theatre in this area."[12]

It seems quite apparent, therefore, that there will always be a need for new children's theatre plays. With the movement increasing in its scope each year, the demand will even become greater for stories, folktales, legends, etc., to be developed into dramatic form. An introduction to the analysis of just one phase of source material available might open an entirely new field of activity for the potential children's theatre dramatist.

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[8] Anne Matlack, personal letter, December 27, 1955.

[9] Winifred Ward, personal letter, January 29, 1956.

[10] Kenneth Graham, personal letter, January 4, 1956.

[11] Aurand Harris, personal letter, December 24, 1955.

[12] Graham, letter.

CHAPTER II

REQUIREMENTS OF THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PLAYS

In general, the criteria to be met in a children's play are similar to those of an adult's play. The main purpose of theatre is to entertain, and the same fundamental principles must be set forth in both types of drama: (1) the plot must have a beginning, middle, and an ending; (2) the story must contain a protagonist with whom the audience can identify itself; (3) the story must constantly progress, even though exposition is taken care of in the beginning of each scene; (4) the playwright must not write down to his audience; (5) suspense should build, but there must be relief spots inserted for relaxation purposes and an opportunity to build to the next point of tension; (6) humor is almost essential, in some parts of the drama. These are all points which must be taken into consideration by a dramatist, but children's theatre authorities have found that some of them need to take precedence over others.

In contrast to the adult play, rather than emphasizing either character, story, or setting--the children's theatre dramatist must always bear in mind that the story is the most important factor to the child audience. Mary Jane Watkins, Instructor in Children's Theatre at Michigan State University, reached the conclusion that "in children's plays each element is subordinate to the story and must

contribute to it if the purpose of children's plays is to be met."[1] Charlotte Chorpenning advises, as one of the requirements of children's theatre plays, that the story must never stop.[2] Mrs. Chorpenning's additional warning that the end of the story must be contained in the beginning[3] concurs with the criteria for all types of drama. Any audience must be prepared for what is to come; of course, this does not mean that the audience is told how the play will end, but it is given reasons to believe that such an ending is possible. A theatre audience will not accept complete surprise as people do in real life. Child audiences are no different; young people will protest against what they would term an illogical ending.

The main character is the next factor to be emphasized in a children's play. The child audience does not demand a young protagonist with whom to identify itself, but the protagonist should be life-like, attractive, and possess a strong desire for some objective.

> In children's drama the protagonist always must achieve his objective. The play must have a happy ending with tragic experience limited to the progress of the play. The happy ending, however, must result from a true interpretation of life's values.[4]

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[1] Mary Jane Larson Watkins, "The Writing and Production of a Children's Play Based Upon Thackeray's The Rose and The Ring" (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Speech, Michigan State University, 1955), p. 17.

[2] Chorpenning, op. cit., p. 13.

[3] Ibid., pp. 55-8.

[4] Ibid., pp. 35-6.

This is quite different from adult theatre where, often, the main character exhibits greed, cruelty, indifference to society, and still overcomes his adversaries. In reverse, adult drama sometimes has the good, honorable protagonist failing to achieve his objective. The antagonist of the children's plays is often portrayed in a comical vein, although there should be no doubt as to the fact that he or she is the villain. Kenneth Graham adds that the villain should be punished on the stage.[5] Any important action which happens to the major characters should occur on stage; as Mrs. Chorpenning says, "Don't tell it, show it."[6] For the description of characters in children's plays, Dr. Graham furnishes this information:

> In general the major characters in children's plays should be developed to 'semi-roundness,' i.e., between one-sided, flat stereotypes and subtle, complex psychological studies.
>
> Minor characters are usually conceived as types in order that emphasis may thereby be placed on the development of the major characters.[7]

The playwright would be neglecting an important part of his play if he failed to inject some humorous characters and scenes. Children will accept many ideas (frightening or otherwise) if they are presented in a comical style. "Children like humor in their plays, but it must be humor that they can understand; that is to say, humor of situation and not of subtle line."[8] This is to be expected in the use of

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[5] Kenneth Graham, "An Introductory Study of Evaluation of Plays for Children's Theatre in the United States" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Utah, 1947), pp. 199-200.

[6] Chorpenning, loc. cit.

[7] Graham, loc. cit.

[8] Bertha Drennon, "Plays for Children," The Commonweal, XIV (June 24, 1931), p. 206.

dialogue, also. Characters do not have to speak in an exact accent, period, or tone; the essential characteristics of dialogue must be that it is clear, tells the story, and shows the character. The dialogue must create a mood or atmosphere from which the audience can detect the meaning of the play. In addition, the playwright should avoid "writing down" to the audience. Dr. Graham explains that many would-be playwrights make the mistake of keeping their vocabulary within the range of the eight to ten year old, thus hampering the imaginative quality of the drama. He furnishes this advice:

> Except where words are essential to plot development or for comedy, the language of certain characters or certain passages need not be completely within the vocabulary of the audience as long as the context carries the meaning or mood value which children can comprehend. Clarity of expression rather than difficulty of words should be the criterion.[9]

In her textbook, Constructing a Play, Marian Gallaway advises playwrights for all types of theatre on their use of theme. She says, "Even in a play designed to carry a message, the skillful playwright will induce belief by making the audience feel as he wants it to feel, rather than by attempting to convince them intellectually."[10] It is true that nearly every child's play exemplifies ideals of loyalty and courage, of honesty, good sportsmanship, and justice; but child audiences do not appreciate obvious preaching any more than do adult spectators. The child wants right to win, but he demands, again, that it come from the action rather than from the conversation in children's theatre plays.

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[9]Graham, dissertation, p. 214.

[10]Marian Gallaway, Constructing a Play (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950), p. 7.

> The possible scope of themes in children's plays is generally considered to be wider than that which most dramatists have exhibited . . . .Thus there is very little in the way of ideas, philosophy, or basic human relationships that cannot be given to children, provided they are crystallized in terms capable of penetrating the child and in turn being absorbed by him.[11]

As in the case of the plot, the development of theme in the children's play should be simple and concrete, within the comprehension of the child audience. The theme of the play should possess qualities of universality in order to create an immediate impression on the audience as a whole. The infinite mind of the child brings us at once to universality, that quality upon which all true art is founded as upon a rock.[12]

In choosing stories for children's theatre dramatization, therefore, it will be necessary to find those that have a universal appeal. The playwright, in transferring a story to dramatic form, should remember the author's root idea in order to make it the main point of his drama. The process of selecting such stories from American local legends will present some complications due to the possibility of numerous legends not having the quality of universality. Richard Adams, Instructor in Children's Theatre at U. C. L. A. warned,

> I wonder if any legend growing out of a geographical region would lend itself to a good play. My point is whether the subject matter would lend itself readily to a universal appeal . . . a child can appreciate theater only if it has significance to him or if he can associate himself with the characters and situations.[13]

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[11] Graham, dissertation, pp. 154-5.

[12] Stuart Walker, Portmanteau Plays (Cincinnati: Stewart and Kidd Company, 1917), p. xxvii.

[13] Richard Adams, personal letter, February 22, 1956.

As was previously stated, the principles underlying successful dramatization for children are similar to those for adults; still, certain rules need to be emphasized. Bearing many playwrighting techniques in mind, plus other established criteria for children's theatre plays, the author has established a list of special rules to follow in selecting local legends for possible child dramas:

1. The local legend must have universal appeal--some underlying theme that will appeal to the child's mind and desires.

2. The story must have action, being able to move steadily to a definite climax.

3. The plot must be simple; however, there must be conflict within the story in order to create interest in the characters.

4. The story should have humorous connotations within it, or be capable of comic addition, without destroying the original quality of the legend.

5. The story must have or suggest a character with whom children can identify themselves.

6. The characters in the story must have human qualities.

7. The story must have or be capable of changing to a happy ending--where right wins logically.

Criteria for children's theatre could not be fairly summarized, however, if its main purpose--that of entertainment--were not constantly emphasized. Margerite Fellows Melcher, an author in the children's theatre field, explains the goal of all children's theatre playwrights thus:

> A play is not real life, it is not a story, it is not a game, although it is related to all three. It has to have some connection with real life, it has to tell a story, it has to be as much fun too as an exciting game. But it is

> more than all these. A play is a magic carpet, and there is room on this magic carpet for all those who want to fly away to explore the land of make-believe.[14]

Most Valuable Materials

What types of material have authorities found to be of most value to children's theatre? One of the first criteria in selecting any story chosen for dramatization is that it should suit the interests and tastes of the children who are to use it. Therefore, even if certain types of material have thus far proved to be of greatest value, selection of stories from those groups must be limited. Miss Ward has divided possible material into seven categories: myths, ballads, hero tales, modern plays, social questions, plays based on a novel, and folk-and fairy-tales.

> It is natural that our first thought should be of those beloved traditional stories which we catalogue as folk-and fairy-tales . . . .The timelessness of "Cinderella," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Hansel and Gretel," "The Sleeping Beauty," the Arabian Nights tales, "Rumpelstiltskin," "Jack and the Beanstalk," must be conceded whenever we sit in a child audience and feel the spell in which these old stories hold all modern children.[15]

In none of these categories does one find American folklore suggested; yet, it would seem that as the years progress the American child should be aware of a certain heritage--a timeless quality--predominant in his own land. The folk-and fairy-tales of which Miss Ward writes were once probably told of actual people, around whom exaggerated

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[14]Margerite Fellows Melcher, Offstage (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1938), p. 3.

[15]Ward, Theatre for Children, p. 64.

detail developed until the original story became a mere outline. Considering the popularity of such dramas as Rip Van Winkle, it would be advisable to pursue the study of more American local legends in order to give the child audience further acquaintance with its own culture. However, since these plays are based on legendary material, including vivid descriptions of the American customs and beliefs, the subject matter would logically fall in Miss Ward's folk-and fairy-tale grouping. It is, therefore, the purpose of the author to develop a study on a branch of the most popular category of stories for dramatization in children's theatre.

CHAPTER III

THE AMERICAN LOCAL LEGEND AS MATERIAL FOR CHILDREN'S THEATRE PLAYS

> The term folklore may be said to include in its definition everything which makes up the body of knowledge and of material things possessed by the simple illiterate people, created by them, and inherited from past generations . . . . All legends and stories, songs, sayings, games, toys, cures, charms, implements of war or of the chase, designs of lace, carpets, rugs, quilts go to make up the body of folklore, which originated with the folk and which belongs to them. It is so extensive that it is to be found in every phase of thought and activity in which man is interested.[1]

Within this field the "local legend" is one of many terms used to denote an account of an extraordinary happening believed to have actually occurred. Other terms used by folklorists are the German term Sage, "local tradition," and tradition populaire. Each of these titles refers to that event or episode, told orally through the years, which perhaps actually happened in ancient times--but which has since attached itself to a certain locality and is accepted as fact by the narrator of the tale. Often legends of a similar nature seem to spring up in different places simultaneously. Their authenticity or their origin cannot be discovered, but the individual storytellers attach the legend to their locale. This form of the local legend is called the migratory legend. Such a legend may be an account of some marvelous creatures--fairies, ghosts, the devil, and the like--; it may be an

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[1] Frank C. Brown, Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. I (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1952), p. 7.

exaggerated experience of some historical character; or it may be one of the varied tales of Indian lovers' leaps from cliffs all over America. Whatever the basis of the legend, it will usually be simple in structure, containing but a single narrative motif.[2]

The author has chosen to evaluate local legends collected by scientific folklorists in an attempt to connect valid folklore to the arts. Dr. Richard M. Dorson, noted American folklorist, has explained the researcher's point of view on folklore thus:

> We ask that lore live in people's mouths for at least several generations, that it be shared by many, that it bear the marks of much handling. Every folk breeds lore, in the process of living and imagining; floating lore always finds a home with a folk.[3]

Dr. Dorson has also presented his arguments for understanding the two terms, folklore and fakelore. He denounces those writers who create tales for commercial use and stamp the stories with the name of folklore. Valid folklore is that material collected by a specialist, who gives credit to the source (preferably an oral one) in the folklorist's printed product. Fakelore is that material created by a writer or speaker, with no previous information received; yet, the artist calls his work folklore.

> Printed sources for folklore can, within limits and with pains, be rewardingly used, and field collecting can be easily abused. But ultimately, to get the full-bodied lore, someone somewhere along the line must talk to the folk, and if the results are to be worthwhile, he must talk intelligently and purposefully. He

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[2] Stith Thompson, The Folk-Tale (New York: The Dryden Press, 1946), pp. 8-9.

[3] Richard M. Dorson, Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 7.

> needs to probe the community, to locate the master story-tellers, to win confidences, to strike the mother lode. He must have careful plans in mind, and yet be resourceful enough to follow unsuspected leads and undiscovered veins. He has to sort out tradition from guff, to capture tangy personalities, to collect with pedantic care and write up his finds with the excitement that belongs to living matter. Then, perhaps, we can tell what the lore is, where it lies, who possesses it, who are the folk.[4]

The local legend reflects American culture particularly well, since it is associated with regional customs, beliefs, and sayings. It describes an experience, a personality, or a place according to the understanding of the regional teller; in this way, each local legend presents an insight into the flavor of an American locale. The author feels that legends, by comparison to other divisions of folklore, lend themselves more easily to dramatic form. The Märchen, humorous anecdote, tall tale, riddle, proverb, folksong, and ballad, and Indian tribal tale may one day be considered as topics for further study. However, the tall tale presents dramatic problems with its nature of rambling exaggeration. The Indian tribal tale was discarded as a possibility for evaluation because the author's purpose is to cover a folklore division typical of the entire United States. Since the "Indian" legend is told by the white man about experiences usually shared by both races, in many sections of this country, it differs considerably from Indian tribal tales. Therefore the "Indian" legend will be considered a local legend for this study.

Charles Neely, in his Tales and Songs from Southern Illinois, collected local legends in the part of his state which the native

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[4] Richard M. Dorson, "Folklore and Fakelore," The American Mercury, 70:335-43 Mr '50.

residents call Egypt. He offers the following defense of the accurate picture such folklore represents of its people and their activities:

> Local legends give us a vivid, but by no means complete, picture of early days in Egypt; the significance of the picture lies in the fact that it is an intimate glimpse into the daily concerns of the common folk. They show us the white settlers living side by side with the Indians and braving the dangers of the forests infested with wolves and panthers. They give us vignettes of daily life, often touched with humor. Some of them throw a glow of romance over the incidents of the past, particularly so in the case of the legends from Kaskaskia. They reveal to us the strife and enmity of Civil War times, with its clash of divided loyalties and its distrust of Southern refugees. And they show us the lawlessness of early times before authority had firmly established itself. Here and there in the stories a single sentence quickens to life a past that has long been dead.[5]

One can see, upon reading the above quotation, that much of what Mr. Neely describes in the local legend, or any other collected folklore, would be unsuitable in its entirety for the child audience. The purpose of the folklorist is to collect verbatim the stories handed down orally from one generation to the other; the purpose of the children's theatre playwright is to sift out the heart of the tale, if it basically follows the criteria set up in Chapter II, and adapt it to dramatic form. "The tale, recorded accurately by a scholar in the form that he received it orally from the 'folk,' may have digressions and lack of continuity that prove very confusing to children."[6] Throughout the ages storytellers have changed their tales

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[5] Charles Neely, Tales and Songs of Southern Illinois (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, The Collegiate Press, 1938), pp. 38-9.

[6] Huber, ed., op. cit., pp. 226-7.

and legends to fit the audiences they were addressing; so long as the basic story line of the legend is suitable for children's theatre, the value of transmitting such material appears to be unbounded. An understanding of their country's customs, beliefs, legends, and sayings could be captured and enjoyed by the American children.

Miss Esme Church, founder and director of the Northern Theatre School, Bradford, England, has evolved a list of principles and policies for production of children's plays. Within this list she has said, "Plays based on local history appeal to all other audiences beyond the single audience directly involved."[7]

Therefore, although the American local legend is indigenous to a particular locality, it has the structure and idea of outer influences, possessing universal appeal. Hundreds of legends have had to be discarded as possibilities for children's theatre plays, since the basic story lines did not fit the criteria set up for evaluation. However, enough legends do basically answer the standards for suitable transference to dramatic form, satisfying the opinion that the legends presented could form a commencement into an immense field of educational, entertaining drama.

Classifying the Legends

With the purpose of choosing legends for dramatization in children's theatre, there has constantly been the necessity for

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[7] Paul Kozelka, Report on Interview with Miss Esme Church, mimeographed, March 1, 1956.

finding a story basically sound--one whose intriguing qualities would not be impeded by addition of secondary plot, development of more-rounded characters, or even a change in final direction of plot. The conclusion was reached that the local legends would have to be organized according to the amount of information supplied by the editors of the chosen folklore collections. Most of the legends read, but not necessarily selected, were actual stories that collectors have recorded on the spot; but some material was information referred to by the folklorist, with suggestions for further research on the subject.

The collections of American local legends by the scientific folklorists are far from complete; in fact, the entire field of valid folklore collecting is so new in this country that only a small percentage of Americans appreciates the valuable contribution such research is making to an understanding of our country's ways. This study should be considered merely an introduction into the possibilities of writing plays from legendary material, excluding the potential realm of tall tales, Indian tribal tales, folksongs and ballads, and other divisions. The children's theatre playwright has an inexhaustible area to pursue; the author merely hopes to point the way to stories and sources of legendary material that might prove entertaining and valuable to child audiences. As the years progress, and more folklore collections are published, the playwright may find this study a helpful introduction to the field.

The author has listed summaries of the chosen local legends in their order of suitability for dramatic transference. It will be left

to the discretion of the playwright to decide the degree to which he can alter the basic legend to the dramatic medium. Dr. Busfield, Instructor of Dramatic Writing at Michigan State University, found that some story material lends itself to literal transference to the dramatic medium, but that other works must be altered in varying degrees to suit the criteria established for dramatic presentation.

> Dramatization implies faithfulness to story and characters and the taking over of the thematic purposes of the original work. If the material lends itself to literal transference, the playwright accepts the plot, characters, and theme in toto and gives them dramatic life.[8]

The very nature of folklore suggests the rejection of dramatization, his first division, since storytellers from generation to generation vary their legends to such an extent that the playwright has to sift out the basic elements and begin his play from there. Storytellers of folklore tradition often omit the point of a story, add elements that have no connection with the original tale, or leave the ending for the listener to imagine. But

> . . . one of the most interesting facts that arises in a study of folk tales is the similarity in the stories handed orally from generation to generation in different countries. Peoples in far-removed lands, and even in widely different periods of time, told the same stories. Details differ, but the essential plots are strikingly similar.
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> . . . . . .
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> The universality of human experience and the sameness of human nature and human emotion everywhere may account for the similarity of the tales.[9]

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[8] Roger M. Busfield, "The Problems of Adaptation and Dramatization" (unpublished paper).

[9] Huber, ed., op. cit., pp. 225-6.

With this resemblance of basic story in mind, the author has selected forty-six local legends, or descriptions of them, whose essential elements possess requirements for children's theatre plays. After analyzing the legends for dramatic possibilities, and conducting further research, the dramatist could decide the degree to which he plans to treat the material--"adaptation," "based upon," "suggested by"--defined by Dr. Busfield as follows:

> Adaptation implies that the purposes of the playwright may supersede those of the author. Since a story usually does not lend itself to literal transference, an adaptation is somewhat faithful to the original material, but the playwright may take greater liberties with plot, character, and theme in terms of dramatic feasibility.
>
> Based upon is a term applied by the playwright to a play which takes as its basis portions of an original story and its characters. More liberal changes in plot, character, and theme are made in accordance with the purpose of the playwright.
>
> Suggested by is a term used when an idea or ideas expressed in an original work are borrowed and amplified and in all probability lose their original identity in the plot of the play.[10]

Upon concluding the summaries of the forty-six local legends the author has attempted to demonstrate means by which the legends can be applied to dramatic form. Three scenarios, each developed from a suggested legend, have been written. The story has been altered to plot, and a universal theme has been decided upon, with an awareness of the necessity to maintain the inherent flavor of the material. With each legend, for which a scenario has been developed, suggestions

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[10] Busfield, op. cit.

have been inserted as to the legend's specific problem or ideas as to further research that might be made. The selection, however general it may seem to be, is admittedly made on a personal basis; another collector might have assembled an entirely different listing. However, the legends concur with five to seven of the criteria established in judging them,[11] and recommendations have been presented for further development, with the assumption that the playwright would retain the native story elements.

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[11] Supra, pp. 11-12.

CHAPTER IV

AMERICAN LOCAL LEGENDS SELECTED FOR POSSIBLE DRAMATIC TREATMENT

The following American local legends are felt to concur with the established criteria.[1] Since this is the first known attempt to suggest such stories that might be developed into dramatic use for children's theatre, future research may establish new criteria or means by which stories may be chosen. The selection of legends has, of necessity, been accomplished through personal opinion. It is hoped that the playwright will find the selection worth-while.

An Indian Legend Concerning the Origin of the Blue Bonnet

This legend came from either the Cherokees or the Comanches to "Jack" Mitchell, whose people lived in Texas for fifty years with the Indians. There had been a great flood and after that a greater drouth. The Indians were starving, and so the medicine men chanted their incantations to the Great Spirit to see what the people should do. Finally the Great Spirit spoke and revealed to them that, in penance for the wrong-doing that had brought evils upon the tribe, there must be a burnt offering of its most valued possession.

In the tribe there was a little maid who clasped, within the folds of her scanty garments, a tiny figure of white fawn-skin, shaped

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[1] Supra, pp. 11-12.

like a papoose. This figure had long braids of black horse-hair; the eyes, nose, and mouth were painted with the juice of berries; she had robed the doll in a skirt, mantle, and high head-dress, out of the feathers of a black-collared bird that calls "Jay! Jay!" through the topmost branches of the tallest and largest trees. She knew that it was the most precious of things owned by the tribe, and her heart was heavy at the thought of sacrificing her papoose for the tribe.

At last she arose and slipped into the night, after she had taken from the fire a bit of wood. Blinking back her tears she thrust her papoose into the coals and held her there until there was nothing left but ashes. Then she scattered the ashes to the east and the west, to the north and the south. At last she put out the remainder of the fire and patted the earth smooth and flat again.

As she did this she felt something as fine and soft as the bird's plumage beneath her palm--she found it to be rooted in the soil. The next morning, after taking her mother to the spot, they brought the chief and he saw the expanse of blue flowers and solemnly informed the people that the command of the Great Spirit had been obeyed and the sacrifice accepted. At once the plains and the open places began to renew their verdure, the people were saved, and the little maiden was renamed, "She who dearly loves her people."[2]

The Red Dress (An Indian Legend)

When Dr. Reid was away on business, a small band of Indians came

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[2] J. Frank Dobie, Legends of Texas (Austin, Texas: Texas Folklore society, 1924), pp. 198-200.

by his house in southern Illinois. The squaws were attracted to the Reids' little baby with his light curly hair and dress. Upon leaving, one Indian woman put her papoose on the floor, snatched up the white baby, said, "Me swap," and ran after the other Indians. Mrs. Reid was beside herself; when Dr. Reid returned she was standing there, with the little papoose on the floor. Dr. Reid told her to wash the baby, curl his straight black hair, and dress him in the brightest dress she could find. He then gathered together some other men and, taking the papoose with him, followed the Indian band. Upon finding them he approached the squaws who gathered around the dressed-up little papoose and remarked how pretty he was. The Indian woman, who had been hiding with the white baby, finally came out and gazed at the papoose. She took the papoose and handed the white baby to Dr. Reid, saying, "Me swap."[3]

Hot Peppers

My pappy was crazy about hot peppers, but he couldn't ever get them to grow. One day Aunt Drusilla was visiting and she told Pap that he was too mild-tempered to grow peppers successfully, that only somebody with a high temper--the hotter the temper, the better the pepper--could plant them so that they would grow. That gave Pappy an idea; he told my eldest brother, Rufe, (who had a terrible temper) to go out that night and plant peppers. Rufe was so mad (he'd already worked all day and hadn't had supper yet) that he went out, cussing

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[3] Neely, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

the family terribly. The peppers grew to be six-seven-eight feet tall.

There were twelve old maids in the neighborhood and fourteen unmarried men, but they didn't seem to have any idea of getting married. Ma said, "Somebody ought to give them old bachelors a kick in the pants, or put a bug in their coffee, or something to make he-men out of 'em." That gave Pappy another idea. At the next church social he had me offer candy (in which he had put pepper seeds) to the old maids--even the married men shined up to them. After the party, though, the bachelors seemed to go back into the same old rut. So Pappy invited the men to a get-together at home; he put pepper seed in the corn liquor and all but Deacon Green (a good churchman and teetotler) drank it and began to wish the girls were there. Pappy had them all in the neighbor's house that night so he sent me over to get them; before the evening was out, eleven of the girls had received proposals. Reba Matthews (who had her heart set on the Deacon) talked to Pappy and then, when the Deacon called upon her a few days later, she fed him some candy. It took some managing but she finally got a proposal from him.[4]

Conrad's Broom

Near Lower Gum-Stump Spring, Pennsylvania, William Crispin erected a log cabin, set up a home for his wife, they had a big family, and then he died of pneumonia at forty-five years of age.

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[4] W. C. Hendricks, ed., A Bundle of Troubles and Other Tar Heel Tales (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1943), pp. 186-190.

Conrad, fifteen years old, became head of the household; he and the other children kept the farm very well.

Conrad became interested in Elizabeth St. Galmier (supposed daughter of an old couple) who was a beautiful blonde, with ethereal qualities. Conrad's mother and others suspected Elizabeth of being a witch. Conrad invited her for dinner on his twentieth birthday; Elizabeth was sixteen. His mother convinced him that he should test her by putting a new broom under the doorstep; when Elizabeth approached the front steps, she took the broom out before going up the steps. That night, after Conrad had escorted her home, she became ill. Her parents sent for Conrad, but Elizabeth died the next day and she became wizened and old in appearance. That night Conrad dreamed of seeing a witch on a broomstick against the moon. Her corpse and cat (six-toed) disappeared the next day; so did the Crispins' new broom.[5]

With this legend a happy ending would have to be developed. Another girl in town is mentioned in the legend; perhaps a secondary plot could be developed to create interest in the other girl.

Rode by Witches

This legend has many variants.

A boy tells his father of a witch's changing the boy into a horse every night and riding him all over the country. One night per week the witches would hold a dance and the boy and other horses would get a chance to discuss their problems.

His father finally takes him to a witch doctor, who shows him how to draw a picture of the witch and shoot a silver bullet through

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[5] George G. Korson, Pennsylvania Songs and Legends (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), pp. 204-12.

the center of the picture. The boy does this and hears of a negro woman's dropping dead in the fields at that time.

The boy then prepares to search for the dancing place to tell the other horses how to free themselves. They follow suit but are not too good shots. The boy sees the witches hobbling around; they decide to go to Georgia where the folks don't know about silver bullets.[6]

Tommy and the Indians (An Indian Legend)

A widow, her daughter, and son were still living in the wilderness of Kentucky, not having been able to find a safer place in which to live. The father had recently been killed by the Indians. One day the mother left the children alone while she went out to the far field to get some corn to grit for bread. Tommy saw some Indians coming, so he put his sister in the oven, following his mother's directions, and then ran and got under a kettle which sat on the dirt floor about eight feet from the stove.

The Indians entered and were just about to give up in the search when one of them saw the kettle move a little. They caught Tommy and tied his hands and feet with leather strips. They carried him away, starting for their camp. That night they built a roaring fire and talked of how they were going to kill the boy. After the fire had died down and they were all sound asleep, Tommy began to try to get loose. In the process some of the Indians groaned, etc., and he had to stop until they were again in deep sleep. He then crawled away and ran for three hours; he heard all kinds of noises around him and

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[6] Hendricks, op. cit., pp. 87-90.

finally found a hollow log and crawled into it. The pursuing Indians tramped nearer and nearer, looking for a sign of him; one stepped upon the log and Tommy's heart was beating two strokes at once then. It was lightning and thundering all this time.

When he thought the Indians were gone, Tommy came out, waited for a streak of lightning so that he could see better, and then ran until morning. He finally came to the river near his home, followed it, and found his mother and sister who were crying and wondering what had become of him. Soon after that they moved into the settlement where they were safer from the Indians.[7]

The Mare With the False Tail

A fellow from Missouri went to various towns selling a beautiful mare of his that had once had its tail cut off. The stub of his tail was six inches long, and it was shaved smooth and dyed yellow. The fellow had a false tail over the stub, and when a sale had been transacted he would remove the false tail, plus the saddle and bridle. Everyone would laugh, and the buyer would come around that day, finally getting the former owner to take the horse back for about twenty dollars.

When this fellow tried the same trick in Arkansas, an old man bought the horse for two hundred dollars but fooled the man by refusing to be bothered by the horse's not having a tail. The former owner

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[7] Leonard W. Roberts, South from Hell-fer-Sartin, Kentucky Mountain Folk Tales (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 1955), pp. 168-170.

finally had to pay the man three hundred dollars to get the horse back; it was his means of livelihood. He never returned to Arkansas again.[8]

This is a very popular local legend. In another locality it has been recorded as The Ill-Looking Horse, with the horse being blind.

Bundle of Troubles

One night Mose went to bed 'bout bowed down with his troubles--seemed as if they were hopping on him all at once. Eventually he went to sleep and had a dream. It seemed as if everyone were fussing about his troubles. The devil became so tired of hearing about everyone's troubles that he ordered the people to put all their troubles in a bundle and bring them to him at the depot; he would rid each and everyone of his troubles.

On his way with his bundle Mose noticed that people he had never thought of having troubles were just loaded down with their big bundles: Sis Tompkins (whom he had never heard complain of a thing); Cunnel LeRoy, the biggest man in town--even white folks. When Mose handed in his bundle to the clerk at the depot, the clerk put a check on it and handed Mose a stub. He was told to return the next Tuesday, that the devil tired of hearing everyone complain that he had the worst trouble, and that he was just exchanging bundles with those who wished to bring theirs to him.

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[8] Vance Randolph, Who Blowed Up the Church House? (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 175.

Dorson, Jonathan Draws the Long Bow (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1946), p. 21.

On his way home Mose started thinking about the other bundles, especially Cunnel LeRoy's small one, and hoping that he wouldn't get his. He worried about exchanging his for someone else's so much that he turned around and proceeded to beg the devil to return his bundle to him.

He pleaded so sincerely that the devil told him he could have it back (after informing him that he had planned to exchange Mose's and LeRoy's) if he promised never to talk about his troubles again. Why didn't Mose take old Cunnel LeRoy's troubles when he had a chancet? He says he saw a coffin in that bun'le and he remembered that in Cunnel's trouble was a little old cancer of the stomach.[9]

The Arkansas Traveler

This legend has many variants, with four persons claiming to have written the first example of the story. One variant is even located in Maine.

A traveler happens to pass by a house in the Arkansas woods and asks for directions. An old man, who is busy playing a tune on his fiddle, will not help him with information. The traveler asks if he can get some feed for his horse; the man says no. The traveler asks if he can stay there himself; the man replies that they don't have enough room for his own family. The traveler asks why the man doesn't fix his leaky roof; the man says that when it rains you can't fix it, and when it's dry you don't need to. The traveler asks the man why he doesn't finish his tune; the man says he can't remember the end of it. The traveler offers to play the rest of the tune for him, he

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[9] Hendricks, op. cit., pp. 3-7.

does, and is offered a permanent home if he wants it--just so that the traveler continues to play the tune for him![10]

The Baker's Dozen

Ven Amsterdam is tending his baker's shop (New York State) and a woman enters. She orders a dozen cookies. Upon being given twelve cookies by Ven Amsterdam the woman declares that the baker should give her more. When Ven Amsterdam refuses, the woman reveals that she is a witch and puts a curse on the baker's shop. The next day Ven Amsterdam begins to fear the witch's power and calls to the spirit of St. Nicolaus for advice. St. Nicolaus appears and advises the baker that he should henceforth be more generous with his fellow man. Immediately after this, the woman enters the shop and orders a dozen cookies. Ven Amsterdam wraps them for her, making sure to add an extra one. Before leaving the shop, the woman takes the curse away and declares that, from then on, a baker's dozen will be thirteen.[11]

The Rival Fiddlers

A negro named Joost gets so tipsy on schnapps that he, upon

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[10] Randolph, The Devil's Pretty Daughter and other Ozark Folk Tales (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), p. 114.

Dorson, Jonathan Draws the Long Bow, p. 8.

James R. Masterson, ed., Tall Tales from Arkansaw (Boston: Chapman, 1943), pp. 186-219.

[11] Charles Skinner, Myths and Legends of our Own Land, Vol. I Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1925), p. 29.

Harold W. Thompson, Body, Boots, and Britches (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1940), pp. 102-4.

walking home from a dance one Saturday evening, plays on past midnight--a great sin. The devil appears and they start a contest. Just as the sun appears Joost sounds the hymn:

"Now behold, at dawn of day,
Pious Dutchmen sing and pray."

The stranger exclaims, "Well, that beats the devil!" and Joost is only knocked cold from his explosive exit. That is why very few negroes are fiddlers today, because they say the violin is the devil's instrument.[12]

Van Wempel's Goose

Van Wempel is sent by his nagging wife to get a goose. He can't resist the tavern so he spends all the money on schnapps and finally falls asleep in a back room of the tavern. He wakes to overhear pirates talking of a treasure; Van Wempel follows the pirates to a deserted house, tries to get the gold, and is caught. The pirates throw him out of the house, but he ends up having accidentally held onto a goose that the men had planned to eat. The wife never does believe his story and is happier to see the goose than to see him.[13]

The Falling Bars

A little girl (in Kentucky) was coming home from school; it was about 10:30 P.M. when she arrived because it had been an unusually long walk from where the hack had let her off. Coming past the barn

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[12] Skinner, op. cit., p. 133.

[13] Ibid., p. 129.

she heard the bars falling; she counted them as they fell and went to check on whether all were down or not. She heard footsteps walking down through the lot and then suddenly stop. She stuck a stick she was carrying in the ground right where they had stopped, and then she ran to the house to tell her mother what had happened.

Her mother told her that forty years before some men had robbed a bank and that a few days after the robbery the sheriff caught them going through her barnyard. Just as the sheriff and his deputy started through the bars, the robbers shot them. Later they were caught and hanged but the people never found their money; nobody ever found it.

The next morning the little girl went out to where she had stuck the stick in the ground and started digging. She dug away until she came to a flat rock, looked below the rock and saw an old money bag about rotten. It was embedded in the rocks. She had enough money so that, when she was married, she could buy a good house for her and her husband.[14]

Dunderberg

A series of tales about crews who learned how to get past Dunderberg, "Thunder Mountain," populated with the Heer, a bulbous goblin, and his followers who brought up storms and even rode the helm of the ships toward the rocks. One parson saved a ship by chanting the song of St. Nicolaus. The goblin, not being able to stand either the spiritual

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[14] Roberts, op. cit., pp. 187-8.

potency or the parson's singing, rode off on a gale, carrying with him the parson's wife's nightcap.[15]

The Mystery of the Palo Duro

A 34-year old man, his wife, and baby return to Palo Duro Canyon, thirty years after his mother and he had left his father buried there. He finds his father's grave located fifty feet east of the old cedar (per mother's instructions) and puts a cross over it. The next two nights he dreams that he hears the words, "Dig fifteen feet east of old cedar tree." After worrying about the reason for the dream, he does dig and finds a chest with coins, valuing $7600.[16]

The Revenge of Josiah Breeze

A town on the Maine coast has been frequently plundered by British seamen during the Revolutionary War. On Thanksgiving Day a British ship is observed to be in trouble off the coast. Josiah, Ezekiah's son, helps the ship land safely--on Thanksgiving Day--even though he and his townspeople had been mistreated by the British. Ezekiah believes that in the storm his son is lost at sea, but the lad returns with the blessing of the British, having guided them skillfully into safe harbor.[17]

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[15] Skinner, op. cit., p. 37.

[16] Dobie, Coronado's Children (Dallas, Texas: The Southwest Press, 1930), pp. 289-94.

[17] Skinner, op. cit., p. 269.

The Rail Splitter

This legend has many variants and is attributed to heroes from various localities.

Four Indians, one with a pistol and three with tomahawks, were going to kill a man who was splitting rails for a fence. He asks them to help him split the log first; they put their hands in the crack, he grabs his maul, and knocks out the glut. The Indians are caught (he kills them with the tomahawk, etc.).[18]

This is specifically attached to Tim Murphy in two of the folklore books. Additional information on him is that he was called the Dan'l Boone of New York State. He made a double barreled rifle that stopped the Indians who were fighting on the British side. He disguised himself often as an Indian and made important discoveries concerning their strength and plans. He fought the Indians in their own way with their own weapons; the colonists often called upon him to direct movements of the scouts.

Once Tim hid in a log when he was being pursued by the Indians; they stopped there, decided to build a fire upon it, and have some supper. The log became so hot that he fired off his rifle. The Indians fled, thinking the devil himself was within the log.

Another time he and an Indian were shooting at each other from behind trees. Murphy put his hat on a stick, the Indian shot it and ran over to scalp his victim. Murphy caught him.

A monument was erected in Middleburgh Cemetery in 1910 to honor him.

Daddy LaGrange, Canaller

Little Rebekah Blackfair ran away from her foster parents who mistreated her, and she disappeared. A flock of stormy petrels (ill omen) followed the "Castle Wheel" up the canal from the sea and

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[18] Randolph, Who Blowed Up the Church House? p. 82.

Emelyn Gardner, Folk Lore from the Schoharie Hills, New York (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1937), pp. 24-30.

H. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 56-62.

circled about it. Daddy ordered the craft to be unloaded of hundreds of bags of plaster; he thought a dead person might be aboard. Upon opening the toolbox, the men found Rebekah, unconscious. As soon as she was revived, the petrels disappeared.

It developed that Rebekah had gone to the Centerville store to do an errand for her foster mother. The driver of a freight wagon had offered her a ride to Harrisburg--to see relatives--she accepted but could not find them. She had seen the canalboat at the wharf, slipped aboard and hid herself in the toolbox. Workman had covered it over with plaster when filling the hold. Daddy and the boatmen took her to Plymouth and helped establish her.[19]

A note on Daddy LaGrange: On Christmas eve he always set the table for thirteen persons (himself and the "twelve girls who had gone sour on him.")

Coal Miners

This is a legend of a feud between Patrick "Grant" O'Neill of Shenandoah and George "Corks" Kramer of Locust Gap Patch (Pennsylvania). O'Neill won the anthracite regional jig-dancing championship in the 1870's. Then he joined the circus and vaudeville, finally retired and returned to his former trade of blacksmith and tool sharpener in Schuylkill County. In 1896 he was challenged by Kramer; Kramer won the contest, but many protested that the judges had been prejudiced against O'Neill. Local men offered a bet of $2500 that Kramer would again outdance O'Neill; this silenced his followers.

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[19] Korson, op. cit., pp. 279-281.

Years passed; judges decided to settle their feud at the Pennsylvania Folk Festival in Allentown. Two white-haired men now, the two danced to the cheering of the crowd until they were breathless. The judges, sensing this as a good time to end the ancient feud, called it a "draw" and the two shook hands in renewed friendship.[20]

Story of Bruneau John

Bruneau John is referred to as the Indian Paul Revere. John saved the whites in the Bruneau tribe massacre by first pretending to have an injured leg so that he couldn't participate in a raid on a freight outfit and then encouraging the Indians to drink. They became so overcome with liquor that they collapsed; John rode all night to warn the whites. They fled to a central spot and there were able to defend themselves when the Bannacks revived.[21]

It was at this battle (South Mountain) that the Indians are believed to have lost their chief, Buffalo Horn. Bruneau John became a scout for the whites and served faithfully through the entire war.

The Tory's Conversion

A Tory patriot, John Blake, tries to shoot George Washington and hits his sweetheart's brother instead. He flees to his sweetheart's home and is begrudgingly allowed shelter by the father. When the rebels pursue him and reveal that it is the son who was shot, the

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[20] Ibid., pp. 362-3.

[21] Federal Writers Project, Idaho Lore; Vardis Fisher, state director (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton printers, ltd., 1939), pp. 22-6.

enraged father rushes to kill Blake. Washington kindly tries to thwart the attempt; meantime, the son (supposed to be dying) revives, Blake is forgiven and, through the men's treatment of him, is converted to the colonial side.[22]

Saved By the Bible

A Tory, Dabney, and a rebel, Warner, get into a fight; Warner succeeds in downing Dabney and the latter pleas for mercy. Warner accuses Dabney of striking his brother (a father of two children) to the heart. Warner relents a little, however, because of Dabney's desperate pleas and takes him to his brother's widow and children.

They decide to let the Bible pronounce Dabney's fate. The book is opened at random and the boy points to the phrase, "That man shall die." Upon Dabney's renewed pleas the girl is told to point to a phrase; the book is reopened and she points to, "Love your enemies." Dabney is allowed to go free. Soon thereafter the father, who was believed to be dead, returns and is nursed back to health. The family rejoiced thereafter that it had not allowed itself to be stained with the blood of Dabney.[23]

Pokepsie (An Indian Legend)

This is a legend of how Poughkeepsie, meaning "Safe Harbor," was named.

A Young Pequot captive and his betrothed devise a clever plan to escape the Hurons, after a previous attempt of theirs to escape

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[22] Skinner, op. cit., p. 156.

[23] Ibid., p. 160.

the Delawares. The plan succeeds and the couple reaches "safe harbor," proceeding to their own country in the east, where they were married.[24]

The Division of the Saranacs (An Indian Legend)

A happy tribe of Saranac Indians annually holds a pleasantly contested race between two young men, the Wolf and the Eagle, to see who can return with the most scalps from a raid on the Tahawi tribe. An old jealous sachem creates enmity within the Saranacs when the Eagle does not return from one of these events, claiming foul play on the Wolf's part. The tribe splits and it isn't until years later that the Eagle, now an old man, returns and tells how he had fallen into a cleft in a rock, been rescued and taken by a group of Canadians to their country, married there, and finally decided to return to his own tribe to die there. The breach is sewn together again, with the Eagle grieving over the pain this has caused his friend, and the Wolf is able to die content. That peace was always kept.[25]

An Event in Indian Park (An Indian Legend)

A young man from Indian Carry secretly wooed a girl from Tupper Lake. A jealous rival succeeded in having his tribe capture him, and the girl was ordered to kill her sweetheart. She made a turnabout and used the axe to free her lover by severing the thongs and, then, clove the rival's skull with a single stroke. The happy pair flew away, and it was even said that a group from Indian Carry, on its way

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[24] Ibid., p. 35.

[25] Ibid., p. 83.

to rescue the young man, succeeded in obtaining the girl's father's consent by presenting knives and arrows at his breast. The pair reached the Carry in safety and lived a long and happy life together.[26]

Contest for Wahconach's Hand (An Indian Legend)

An old Mohawk chieftain and a young warrior, Nessacus, are contesting for Wahconach's hand in marriage. Since the chieftain is influential, and Wahconach prefers Nessacus, the father decides that the spirit of the stream should decide the issue. That night the chieftain and a priest fix the rocks, to direct the current their way; but the next day the canoe is still carried to the feet of Nessacus. No one knows if he redirected the current, but the ending of the story was a happy one--Nessacus and Wahconach were married.[27]

The Mermaid

This legend has eight variants, located in the Atlantic Ocean, Mississippi River, and Alabama River.

There is believed to have been a rule of the sea whereby the captain of a ship had to substitute names of articles for his sailors' names, for whatever the captain called, a mermaid would demand that it be thrown to her. If the captain refused, the mermaid threatened to capsize the ship. Captains, therefore, would order, "Hammer, go on deck and look out," or "Ax, you go down in the kindling room and start a fire in the boiler." Then the mermaid would call, "Give

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[26] Ibid., p. 86.

[27] Dorson, Jonathan Draws the Long Bow, p. 142.

hammer to me," or "Give ax to me," and the captain would have to throw the article overboard.

One day the captain forgot and said, "Sam, go in the kitchen and cook supper." The mermaid immediately called, "Give me Sam." The captain had to throw Sam overboard, and the mermaid quickly wrapped Sam in her long hair and took him to her home under the sea. They were married, but after a while Sam started stepping out with other mermaids. The wife beat up one of the girl friends, and the girl vowed to get even with her. One day one of the girls offered to return Sam to his home on land and, so, he took her suggestion and she quickly carried him to the shore. He never saw the mermaids again.[28]

How Medicine Mounds of Hardeman County Got Their Name (An Indian Legend)

There were four mounds in Hardeman County that are called the Medicine Mounds; it is from these heights that a good spirit is supposed to have taken his positions that he could see for miles around to help the Indians direct their arrows in hunting and fighting. During the early days one tribe was settled in this area, killing big game and fish with their arrows. There was a medicine man with a beautiful daughter who had become sick with a fever. Her father had done all he could for her, but he did not seem able to drive away the evil spirits. In despair he went outside the wigwam, squatted down, and prayed to the good spirit that dwelt upon the high rock. Instantly his expression seemed to take on one of hope; the idea came to him

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[28] Dorson, Negro Folktales in Michigan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 147-8.

that he might mix his medicine on the rock. He did so and then returned to his daughter. Her brow was not so hot; was she better or had he lost her? He went again outside the wigwam and prayed for many hours. It was nearing evening when he heard a faint voice, the voice of his daughter calling him by name. He rose joyfully; the evil spirit (fever) had left her while he was away, and she had simply fallen into a deep sleep. The good spirit had saved her. The medicine man never forgot the spirit of the rock; and it is said that every year he went regularly to these mounds in order to instill some of this good spirit into his medicine.[29]

Joseph Bonaparte - Mountaineers

There are possibilities of developing legends around Joseph Bonaparte (who lived in New Jersey).

One legend is given about Newell, a rough mountaineer, who was invited to Bonaparte's house and learned to be courteous because of Bonaparte's attitude.[30]

There are also legends about Eleazer Williams who claimed to be Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette's Lost Dauphin.

Captain Kit Pennel - Treasure

Captain Kit Pennel, of Orrs Island, Maine, had eleven boys on his farm who helped him eke out a meagre living. They found a pot of pirate gold and became successful business men.[31]

Much information is given on the art of searching for treasure, but the plot would have to be developed further.

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[29]Dobie, Legends of Texas, pp. 207-8.

[30]H. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 305-7.

[31]Dorson, Jonathan Draws the Long Bow, p. 179.

Miss Nannie

This is a character sketch of Miss Nannie who tried to tell all the folks in the county how to run their own critical affairs. Very few stood up to Miss Nannie. When she was a teacher she humiliated the kids, scaring them so much that they couldn't even remember their names. She drove her husband off in less than a year; she found everything wrong with him no matter what he did. One morning she went into his room to nag him and he was gone. She told the farmers what they were doing wrong in planting their crops, criticized the bride's trousseau, advised the preacher on how he might have improved his sermon, couldn't keep her servant girls--but no one dared to talk back to her.

One day Abe Ritzel, a big powerful man who had just moved next door to Miss Nannie, was out by the barrel fixing to dip his dogs when he noticed Miss Nannie watching him across the fence. He picked up a pup and ran its hind legs through the dip, purging it from fleas and mange, when Miss Nannie called out, "Mr. Ritzel, you ain't a-dipping them dogs right. Their ears should go in first." She proceeded to come into his yard and picked up one of the dogs, saying, "Poor little doggie, you is dipped all wrong." Abe put the dog down carefully, took his hat off easylike, went over to Miss Nannie, and said, "Shet your mouth." He grabbed her tight around the waist, shoved her head in first and held her in the dip for a spell. When he let her up, he yelled, "Is that the right way to dip, ears first, or does you want I should try the other way around?"[32]

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[32] Hendricks, op. cit., pp. 69-73.

General Pike

Many tales are given of General Albert Pike, who lived in Arkansas from 1832 to 1862. General Pike had many hairbreadth escapes and exciting adventures; he is said to have walked five hundred miles of the way from Massachusetts to New Mexico and then more to Arkansas.

His first job was at Van Buren; as a schoolmaster, he earned three dollars per month, half in cash and half in pigs. As a circuit judge he is said to have carried a brass band with him. In the Confederate service he commanded an Indian brigade. Once he was reported to be dead; friends conducted a wake for him, but he appeared much alive and celebrated the wake with them.[33]

Leatherstocking

Two New York Staters, Nick Stoner and Nat Foster, are claimed to be Cooper's examples for Leatherstocking. Stoner's father was murdered by the Indians. He vowed revenge and, upon being tried for killing some Indians, he was released by a mob and the Squire, from any trial. He was married three times. Similar information is given for Nat Foster.[34]

Jean Lafitte, the Pirate

There are many legends about Jean and Pierre Lafitte, a pair of brothers, who became privateers outside New Orleans. Most of the legends are about Jean Lafitte's treasures that were buried on his island and elsewhere, about attempts to get the treasures, and how Lafitte is different from Captain Kidd in that he appears often as a ghost who wants to pay retribution for his sins by helping a person find his gold. The person always seems to run away, though, without digging for the treasure.[35]

Dolph Heyliger

Dolph Heyliger was investigating the farm of his doctor guardian

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[33] Fred W. Allsopp, Folklore of Romantic Arkansas, Vol. II (New York: The Grolier Society, 2 volumes, 1931), pp. 107-8, 265, 312-15, 344-8; also notes in v. 1.

[34] H. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 67-71.

H. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 62-67.

[35] Dobie, Legends of Texas, pp. 179-191.

and was led by the ghost of Killian Vander Spiegel to a well. Soon thereafter, in response to his previous dream, he took a boat trip up the Hudson and became friends of Anthony Vander Heyden and his daughter. At their house Dolph found the picture of Killian Vander Spiegel. Investigating further, he discovered that the doctor guardian and Vander Heyden, plus Heyliger, were related through the ghost to a fortune. Heyliger went to the well to which Vander Spiegel had led him, secured gold from it, and then sent for Vander Heyden's daughter. He married her and they lived happily, and wealthily, thereafter.[36]

Cornplanter Indians (An Indian Legend)

At the foot of the Alleghenies lives a group of Indians who are descendants of Cornplanter, son of a young Albany dutchman and a Seneca girl of influential family. Cornplanter became the leader of the Senecas and spent most of his life throwing his following's support to the Americans. Eventually, he decided that the white men had betrayed his people; therefore, he commissioned for a spot of land and retired there. There are many stories of him, his descendants (also famous), and his people's beliefs.[37]

Sequoyah, Inventor of the Cherokee Alphabet (An Indian Legend)

About 1793 a white man was captured by the Cherokees. He excited the curiosity of the Indians with a crumpled letter which was found on his person. He managed to be freed because of its supposed magical power. Sequoyah, because of an accident, was unable to fight or hunt. He sat and brooded over the incident of the man and his letter and

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[36] Skinner, op. cit., p. 109.

[37] Korson, op. cit., pp. 163-194.

gradually devised a plan to use symbols for syllables. It took him ten years to devise a simple alphabet but he received much recognition, even from George Washington, for his achievement.

During this process, he and his daughter were tried for witchcraft by the Indians, he started the first Indian newspaper, and was given a grant of land, money, and a pension for his wife after his death.

After being proclaimed a warrior, Sequoyah decked himself in the finest garments and stood by the wigwam door of the maiden he wished to marry. For days he conducted this silent courtship until the parents fixed a price and the maiden gave her first smile of encouragement. He then hastened home and back to tie the horses near her wigwam and leave some robes. The next morning he hurried back to find the horses stabled and the girl packing away the robes. Thus the girl became his wife.[38]

The Enchanted Rock in Llano County

Don Hesu Navarro, a recent arrival from Spain and a bold soldier of fortune, wins the love of Rosa, the beautiful daughter of Indian chief Tehuan (who lived at the mission). The Comanches attack the mission, kill the chief and kidnap Rosa, with the intention of offering her as a sacrifice to the Spirit of the Rock.

Don Hesu hastens to Goliad for aid and he and a daring band of Spaniards and Texas colonists pursue the Comanches. They first thwart

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[38] Allsopp, op. cit., pp. 120-5.

the Indians' intent by stampeding their horses and assaulting their guards in the dark. The Comanches gallop away to the hills. The whites arrive to see Rosa tied to the stake, the faggots piled high about her. The white group divides in two and, in his fear for the maiden, Don Hesu succeeds in freeing Rosa and escaping with her beyond the reach of the savages.[39]

Windham Frog Fright

The Windhamites mistake a traveling army of noisy frogs for a French and Indian invasion. The account tells of the people's flight from bed in varying stages of undress, two citizens' names being heard called to retreat, and the dead frogs being found the next morning.

Another account tells about Colonel Dyre, a great Indian fighter from Windham, Connecticut. One night his men were called together by a blowing of horns, beating of drums, and special messengers. A terrible Indian war whoop and cry came from the forest, followed by continuous cries of "Colonel Dyre! Colonel Dyre!" The colonel resolved to lead his men at once against the enemy. They moved with caution and, guided by the cry of the enemy, came upon hundreds of bull frogs, who were rejoicing at having found a supply of water in a small pond.[40]

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[39] Dobie, Legends of Texas, pp. 155-6.

[40] Dorson, Jonathan Draws the Long Bow, pp. 17-18.

Thomas Benjamin Hazard, The Jonny-Cake Papers of "Shepherd Tom" (Boston: Printed for the Subscribers, 1915), pp. 361-2.

The Devil in the Graveyard

This legend is of considerable folklore interest, having more variants than any other legend known.

A rich man, crippled with rheumatism, has seven of his sheep stolen by a widow and her sons. His sons tire of his saying he would catch the thief if it weren't for his rheumatism, so they set him in the graveyard near the pasture. The widow, who has been sending her boys into the pasture for sheep and testing their fatness, was sitting on a tombstone. Thinking the father was a sheep, she grabbed his leg and said, "Is he fat?" The sons and man ran away; afterward the man claimed the Devil had risen up to cure his rheumatism.[41]

Horn Eats Horn or Under Gravel I Do Travel

This legend has many variants.

One is about an innocent, accused man who manages to get himself freed through thinking up a riddle:

> Horn eat horn, up a white-oak tree,
> If you unriddle this, you can hang me.

Another freeing was accomplished by the victim's thinking up this riddle:

> Under gravel I do travel,
> On oak leaves I do stand,
> I ride my pony and never fear,
> I hold my bridle in my hand.[42]

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[41] Randolph, Who Blowed Up the Church House?, p. 25.

[42] Randolph, The Devil's Pretty Daughter, p. 36.

Randolph, Who Blowed Up the Church House?, p. 143.

Warriors of the New Nation

Mention is made of legends which exist about Oliver Hazard Perry on Lake Erie (during the War of 1812) and Commodore Thomas Macdonough at the battle of Plattsburg.[43]

Red Jacket

Mention is made of Red Jacket, a famous Indian orator, who became famous because of his conduct in trials and conversations held in the vicinity of Buffalo, New York.[44]

The Drop Star (An Indian Legend)

A woman's daughter is taken by Indians and it isn't until the daughter is eighteen that word is received telling the mother she may have her daughter if she comes for her. The chief's daughter has been like a sister to the white girl. Upon the daughter's deathbed, the Indian maiden persuades her father to return Drop Star to her white mother. The woman's nephew goes to get her, the chief drowns himself in the canoe after giving the girl up, and the nephew soon woos and marries the girl. She takes her Christian name again but leaves to the lake on whose banks she has lived for so long her Indian name of Drop Star: Kayutah (Cayuga).[45]

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[43] H. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 341-52.

[44] Ibid., Chapters 17-18.

[45] Skinner, op. cit., p. 69.

The Watcher on White Island

During Blackbeard's last stand against the law, Blackbeard's lieutenant exacted a promise from his sweetheart that in the event of their defeat she would watch over the treasure. The girl managed to escape from Blackbeard's ship, before it sank, but after reaching shore she soon died. Ever since that time the lieutenant's sweetheart can be seen watching over the treasure.[46]

A Travelled Narrative (A localized trickster tale)

This legend has many variants.

When a New England storekeeper suspects that a visiting loafer is in the process of stealing butter from him, he urges the loafer to stay and talk to him. He engages the thief in conversation but seats him near the stove. The butter, which the loafer has concealed under his hat, begins to melt and run down the thief's forehead.[47]

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[46] Ibid., p. 208.

[47] Dorson, Jonathan Draws the Long Bow, p. 20.

THREE SCENARIOS

The following includes the development of three scenarios from the suggested local legends. An explanation is presented, before each scenario, as to the specific dramatic problems of the individual legends. Marian Gallaway's steps in planning the course of action for a play have been adopted.[48]

Adaptation of the "Blue Bonnet" to Scenario Form:

To illustrate how the author selected this local legend as a possibility for transferring it to dramatic form, the legend was tested by the criteria set up on page 12. It was found that the legend answered all the standards established but two. The "Blue Bonnet" needed more conflict to make it interesting enough for a three-act play, and humorous elements were not apparent in the basic story. The legend was chosen as an example of how such elements could be inserted without destroying the idea of the original story. Since so little of the basic legend has to be changed, the scenario of the "Blue Bonnet" lends itself to the term adaptation.

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[48] Each step can usually be joined by one of three connectives: AND, BUT, and THEREFORE. An emphasis on AND would show steady motivation, with numerous causes; a predominance of the connective THEREFORE indicates effect, logical coherence; a prevalent use of BUT would create suspense and is especially effective toward the conclusion of the play. Miss Gallaway's theory has been utilized for the development of the three scenarios in this chapter. Gallaway, op. cit., p. 118.

BLUE BONNET

A little Indian maiden is seen slipping into the circle in front of the tepees

and

She starts toward her home, calling to two comical friends to follow

but

A young brave comes out of the forest

and

He stops her, asking her where she has been; that all the braves are out looking for her

and

Her father, the chief, is frantic; that isn't it enough worry for her father, that the tribe is slowly starving from the flood and drought without her causing him more concern?

and

The two companions express excitement over everyone's searching for them

but

The brave declares they were not searching for those two

and

The maiden is ashamed, and she explains lamely that she and her friends have only been playing with her doll that the brave had made her, for whom she had made a high head-dress, out of the feathers of a black-collared bird that calls "Jay! Jay!" through the topmost branches of the tallest and largest trees--and that she did not mean to cause alarm in the village

therefore

The brave takes out a drum and beats it to call the other braves in

and

The father and mother come out of the tepee to see what has happened

and

The girl quickly apologizes and explains where she has been

therefore

The father excuses her, explaining that nothing in the tribe means as much to him and the people as she does--that is why they were so worried

and

The two companions run up and ask the girl to play with them

but

The head medicine man comes out of one of the tepees to say that another Indian is ill

and

The tribe has spent too much time searching for the maiden who has caused many braves to use energy they needed to conserve

and

He begs the chief to let them (the medicine men) find out the trouble

therefore

The chief calls for a meeting right then
and
The young brave is ordered to beat the meeting drum
and
The people gradually come to it, while the little girl and her companions are explaining to her mother what they have been doing with her doll
and
The medicine men are ordered to chant their incantations
but
They frighten the little girl who feels they are talking to her
and
They issue the ultimatum from the Great Spirit--that a burnt offering of its most valued possession be given in penance for the people's wrong doing
but
The chief, mother, young brave, and others look at the little maiden and yell, "No!"
and
The little maiden looks at her doll and cries, "No!"
but
The medicine men demand that the Great Spirit's wish be fulfilled
and
They look toward the maiden who is hiding her doll from the group (toward audience)
therefore
The chief sadly declares that the tribe will retire to their homes, think over the decree, and return the next morning with the decision of what the offering should rightfully be
and
They all leave, very much disheartened
but
The little maiden remains behind, clasping her homemade doll to her
and
The two companions come to her to play with them
but
The maiden refuses
and
She confesses that she knows that the doll is the most priceless possession in the tribe and she has decided to sacrifice her doll in the clearing they have just come from
but
The two companions say someone else can sacrifice--the doll furnishes too much enjoyment
but
They are interrupted by the maiden's mother who calls to her child to come comfort her father who is very sad
and
The mother asks the child to lay the doll outside the tepee, to think only of her father for a while
therefore

The two companions talk over the maiden's decision
and
They decide to play a joke on her and steal the doll in case she decides to go through with the sacrifice
but
As they are approaching the chief's home, they hear men's voices approaching
therefore
They decide to hide (downstage of tepee)
and
They overhear the medicine men talking of their plan to name the maiden as the supreme sacrifice so that the head medicine man's son may one day be chief
and
The companions attempt to get closer to hear better, almost giving their presence away
but
The entrance of the young brave makes the medicine men decide to retire to their quarters
and
The companions call to the brave and tell them what they've heard
therefore
The young brave convinces them that they must save the maiden
and
The three decide to let the maiden go to the clearing, pretending she can sacrifice the doll
and
There they will persuade her to flee
and
The maiden comes out, determined to make her father and tribe happy again by sacrificing her doll
and
The three say it's okay
therefore
With a slight sob she runs into the forest
but
The young brave has silently stolen after her
and
The two companions call, "Wait for me, etc." and they run out too
and
The curtain closes

Scene Two

Deep in the woods the little maiden and her three friends come upon a small clearing
and
She asks them to help her build a fire
and

The brave takes the other two aside and asks them to go along with the idea for a while to humor her

but

The companions show their inability to collect even wood for a fire, and the other two have to do most of the work

but

The brave decides it's time to persuade her to leave so he tries to explain to her how the doll is not what the Great Spirit is expecting for a burnt offering

but

She explains how precious the doll is and that nothing is more loved in their whole tribe

and

She asks him and the companions to go for more wood; they leave reluctantly

and

She runs and thrusts her doll into the fire, holding it there until there is nothing but ashes

and

She scatters the ashes to the east and the west, to the north and the south (incantation ceremony)

and

She puts out the rest of the fire and pats the earth smooth and flat again--while the brave and companions return, entranced by her actions

and

The two companions weep because their plaything is gone

and

They cry out that she, not the doll, is the sacrifice the medicine men were referring to

and

The maiden asks them what they mean

but

The young brave tries to stop them from telling her

but

The two companions tell her of the conversation they overheard (humorously impersonating the medicine men)

and

The maiden falls back upon the mound with a cry

and

The young brave sits beside her to comfort her and tell her that they will help her flee until greenness and blossoms come back

and

The companions show (humorously) how they will fight to protect her from harm

but

The maiden and brave suddenly realize they are touching something other than dirt

therefore

They turn around to feel the ground more carefully, realizing flowers are blooming there

and

The two companions run over to see what they are talking about

and

They humorously describe the soft feeling under their hands

and

They express fear that it is some of the medicine men's magic

but

The maiden, with the young brave's approval, declares it must be an answer from the Great Spirit and that she should go tell her mother and father

therefore

The two decide to run to her mother and the tribe to tell them of the strange happening

and

The two companions find themselves alone again and run out, calling, "Wait for me! Wait for me!"

Scene Three

It is morning (daybreak) and the little girl and her mother come into the clearing

and

The little girl rushes to the spot where the offering had been made

and

She calls to her mother to come see the little blue flowers

therefore

Her mother comes to see them

but

They are interrupted by the young brave and the two companions who have alerted the entire tribe

and

They warn the two women that the medicine men are close behind, that they have run ahead to see what has happened since they were there with the maiden

and

The two companions impersonate the medicine men when they heard the news

but

The medicine men enter during the impersonation and, noticing the flowers, exclaim that that is not enough of a sign from the Great Spirit, that they should return to see what the tribe thinks the burnt offering should be

therefore

They call to the maiden and her mother to return with them, and they all start toward the village

but

They are interrupted by the chief and other Indians who have come along

and

The chief runs to his daughter who takes him to the flowery spot

and

He looks at the blue flowers, hearing his daughter's tale of sacrifice

but

They are interrupted by the medicine men who demand the daughter be sacrificed

but

The young brave interrupts and tells the chief of the two companions overhearing the medicine men plot the daughter's death

therefore

The chief orders the medicine men to be quiet (they are protesting the accusation) and he begs the Great Spirit to present a sign if this sacrifice is to be accepted

and

The plains and the open places around suddenly become green, with blue flowers showing everywhere

and

The medicine men start to run away as the people are busy rejoicing over the incident, with the chief declaring that his daughter's sacrifice had saved the people

but

The brave detects them and calls to the two companions to help him catch them

and

A merry chase ensues, with the medicine men and two companions knocking into each other

but

The young brave gets hold of both eventually and he takes them before the chief

and

The chief demotes the men to regular braves until they can prove their worthiness to again be medicine men

and

He asks the people to join him in a feasting dance in honor of his daughter

and

The braves make the medicine men get in the center and pretend they are the meat that is being brought home from the hunting while the rest assemble around, with the maiden in the center

and

They cheer her as the curtain closes

Explanation of Scenario Based On the "Baker's Dozen":

In checking the basic legend of the "Baker's Dozen" against the criteria established for transference to dramatic form, the legend was found to be suitable except for the lack of a protagonist with whom the child audience could identify. Because the baker is forced to be more generous, rather than wanting to be, this does not create a character who performs the act of working toward a definite goal and a happy ending. Therefore, a small boy was inserted into the plot--one who has received kindness from the baker and who wants happiness to come the baker's way.

THE BAKER'S DOZEN

The scene opens with children gathering in the town square for their annual visit with Nicolaus (he's with them), who visits each town along the Hudson once in December--before Christmas

and

They settle down for a visit and they recall "old favorites" in the way of stories that they'd like Nicolaus to tell them

but

A little boy comes running on, calling to Nicolaus to wait for him--he wants to hear the story, too--

but

The children tease him, saying he'd better go back to old Hans the Baker--Hans would be mad if he knew Karl were having fun--and they imitate old Hans, with the little boy backing up fearfully toward Nicolaus

therefore

Nicolaus asks the boy if this is true and the boy tries to stick up for Hans but the children (through questions directed at him) say isn't it true that Hans won't let him play with them after working hours? Doesn't Hans make him sleep in the attic? Does Hans ever thank him for doing favors for him?

but

The boy replies that it makes him happy to do favors for Hans and that he doesn't need to be thanked

but

The children ask him how many boys have left Hans in the past year

and

Karl haltingly replies ---- Ten--

therefore

The children say, "You see--other boys won't take such treatment,"

but

The boy runs to St. Nicolaus and says, "But Hans took me in when I had no home--he feeds me;--and I am here now!-----"

but

The children laugh at him

but

They are interrupted by Hans who comes into the square, calling for Karl. When he sees him standing by Nicolaus he scolds him for fooling around and orders him to go get the cookies, etc., for the market booth

therefore

Karl runs to get the materials

but

Hans remains to order the "lazy" boys to go help their masters

but

Nicolaus stands up to explain that the masters have excused the children from work today--this is their holiday and they are going to prepare for Christmas

therefore

Hans stalks out of the square, shouting that the masters are crazy to give their boys a day off--this is the busy season of the year--children should not be spoiled

and

The children remind Nicolaus of how cruel they said Karl's master was

but

Nicolaus remembers Karl's sorrow, when no one would take him in, and agrees with Karl that Hans is taking care of him; but he expresses concern that the old witch will destroy Hans if he doesn't watch out

therefore

The children ask who the old witch is

and

Nicolaus explains that, especially around Christmastime, he is bothered by an old witch who harms the people who are mean to others and don't have the Christmas spirit--and that he is powerless to help them--

and

The children gasp, for they remember other people who have disappeared at other Christmastimes, and their parents have said it was because they were so stingy

therefore

Nicolaus tells them that this witch likes to bother him but that the children don't need to worry because she can only harm people who are not generous at Christmastime

but

Other merchants come in and start to set up shop

therefore

Nicolaus invites the children to go down to the woods with him and they'll find a tree to bring back to decorate

therefore

The children leave with him, the merchants calling to them to bring back a good tree--they have many pretty decorations for it this year

but

Hans enters, calling to Karl to hurry with the cart of gingerbread boys and other goods

but

The merchants jeer at him for forcing the boy to work

therefore

Hans retorts that the boy belongs to him and that they should mind their own business

but

The merchants tell him that's true, but Hans has certainly forgotten his childhood Christmases, and they then mention that it will be a while before the people start coming--does Hans wish to join them in a cup of coffee?

but

Hans replies that he doesn't care to

therefore

They leave, jovially talking of the fun the children must be having

but

An old woman comes into the square, passing the merchants as they go out talking; she is all in black but she takes out a brighter shawl and covers her black one. She heads slowly for the baked goods booth, listening to the ensuing conversation carefully

but

Karl offers to have his master go with them; he can tend the booth, and people usually don't come this early, anyway

but

Hans says he must be there to be sure the boy counts the merchandise correctly

and

The old woman steps up to the booth and asks Hans what he has in the way of Christmas cookies

therefore

Hans describes them to her, and she orders a dozen gingerbread boys

therefore

Hans goes back to the boy and, while they're counting and wrapping the box, he boasts of how he didn't leave for coffee and now he has this woman's business

therefore

He hands the box to the woman who proceeds to open it and count the cookies

but

Hans goes up to watch her and declares he never cheats a customer--why should she count them?

and

The boy says it's true--that his master always gives his customer the amount he pays for

but

The old woman declares that Hans owes her one more cookie

and

The boy tells her she has the 12 cookies she ordered but she may have another at Christmastime if she wishes--isn't that right, Master? (trying to smooth everything over)

but

Hans shouts that he will <u>not</u> give her more

and

He shoos her out of the square

but

As she leaves, she tells him he does not deserve his business and that soon he will be no more (she takes off the bright shawl at this point)

therefore

(Hans does not see her take the bright shawl off) Hans runs back to Karl, scornfully laughing at her (woman overhears him on her way out)

but

Karl (who has seen her in her black outfit) becomes frightened, and he begs Hans to call the woman back and give her all the free cookies she wants

but

The merchants have gradually begun to come back, with customers at their heels

therefore

Hans tells the boy to begin calling them to the booth

therefore

The boy begins a regular "barker's rendition" for the Christmas baked goods

but

The people buy from the other merchants but, after looking over the baked goods and acting as if they've decided on something, they start to give the order to Hans--change their mind--and go on to another booth to buy--or leave the square

therefore

Karl finally realizes they've been put under a witch's spell, and he begs his master to go find the woman

but

Hans refuses

and

All of a sudden, he runs out of the square, yelling, "Let go! Let me go!"

therefore

The boy calls and runs after him

and

The curtain closes

Scene Two

The scene opens with the merchants closing up shop, at noontime, their goods all sold--but with the baker's booth conspicuously full of goods and no one there to sell them

and

The merchants are discussing how good business is, but everyone is wondering where Hans and Karl are--they have been gone all morning, ever since Hans ran out of the square, with Karl trying to stop him

but

Karl walks dejectedly in, very tired

and

The merchants ask him where he's been and where Hans is

therefore

Karl wearily answers that he's been looking for Hans all morning, that he just seems to have disappeared

and

Some of the merchants recall other merchants disappearing; they gradually bring in the fact that it was always at Christmastime

but

Nicolaus and the children enter at this time, with their tree, and they show it to everyone. The merchants exclaim over its beauty and say they shall have to decorate it--but, first, they all must help Karl find Hans

therefore

Nicolaus has Karl briefly tell him what happened

but

The children try to say, "Good riddance to Hans, if he isn't here anymore"

but

Karl insists he was a good master, taking him on when no one else would

but

Two children with a dancing bear try to cheer him up, having the bear do tricks for food (given them by the merchants)

and

They promise Karl that Nicolaus will tell him a story, now that Hans is away,

but

Karl says, as much as he'd like to hear a story, he can't bear to sit and listen to one when his master may be in trouble

therefore

Nicolaus tells him that the best way to help Hans would probably be to keep his business going--since that's what means the most to him

therefore

Karl says for every 12 cookies bought he will give another gingerbread boy to be placed on the tree

therefore

The children and merchants set up and begin to decorate the tree

and

Karl sells many cookies, giving an extra one to each buyer, who then places a gingerbread boy on the tree

and

The children do a gay dance around the tree, with Nicolaus supervising the fun

but

The happy scene is interrupted by the old woman who enters and declares that she has managed to spoil Nicolaus' fun this year, too, by making the baker disappear

therefore

Although the rest of the people fall back in fear, Karl rushes out to her and begs to know where Hans is

but

Nicolaus stops him and explains that only Hans can bring himself back

and

The old woman leaves, laughing shrilly

therefore

Karl runs after her but he returns, exclaiming she has disappeared as fast as Hans did

and

Karl cries out that now he has no master

therefore

Everyone agrees to go help him find Hans, and they assign certain sections of the town, with Karl being left to "hold the fort" in case Hans returns there. Nicolaus says he'll stay with Karl, but he shakes his head sadly as the crowd leaves; Karl waves his hand hopefully

and the curtain closes

Scene Three

The scene opens with Nicolaus working around the tree, emptying gifts from his bag

but

The old woman enters and tries to reach Karl (who is sleeping) quietly so that Nicolaus won't hear her

but

Karl stirs in his sleep

therefore

Nicolaus looks over at him and sees the woman

therefore

He runs to the boy and demands to know why she's there

and

She replies that she has the baker in her power and, therefore, that entitles her to all his possessions--including the boy

but

Nicolaus says she can't have the boy--somewhere he'll find Karl a new master and then she won't be able to take him

but

Karl wakes up and cries out when he sees the old woman, and he stands up, begging her to tell him what she has done with Hans

but

She laughs and tells Nicolaus that, if he doesn't find Karl a master before the sun goes down, she will come and take him away

and

She leaves, passing villagers who are returning from hunting for Hans,

and

Karl runs to them, questioningly, but they all say they didn't see him anywhere

but

Nicolaus tells the people they have to find a new master for Karl, for the witch is coming back for him, too,

but

Karl says he doesn't understand why an old witch would want a little boy--there's something funny about this--

and

Nicolaus says, Yes, it's strange--the witch has never come back for boys before; she must be having trouble keeping Hans

and

The people say, She must think he'll be content to stay if Karl is there

but

Karl says he knows his master loves him and his bakery shop too much to want to be under the spell of a witch

but

They are interrupted by Hans who runs into the square, calling for Karl and he is much relieved to find Karl is all right

and

The people explain how the witch planned to take Karl away, too,

therefore

Hans says he knows it, and that's why he's there--he broke out of her spell long enough to tell Karl not to go with her

but

Nicolaus tells Hans no one can save Karl but Hans

but

The witch comes running on, and Hans shrinks back from her

therefore

Nicolaus calls to Karl to tell Hans about his business

therefore

Karl runs to the booth and to the tree, telling Hans of how he sold more cookies than they ever have sold before, despite the fact that he <u>gave</u> an extra gingerbread boy for each 12 sold

but

The witch, who has been frightened by Karl's explanation, steps forward and shouts she's had enough of this nonsense--Karl and Hans must come with her

and

Karl calls, Help, Master!

therefore

Hans steps forward happily and declares that the witch may do anything she wishes to him but that he will not let her have Karl, and he announces that he is no longer Karl's master--Karl will be his partner--but he advises him to keep the shop going the way he has and, from now on, to have a baker's dozen be 13

but

The witch cries out for help and runs out of the square, with the people hilariously chasing her

therefore

Hans, much puzzled, asks where the witch has gone

therefore

Nicolaus explains to him he has found the secret of escaping her forever

and

Hans says all he wanted to do was save Karl

therefore

He asks Karl what he'd like to do to celebrate the day

and

Karl says he'd like to hear a story from Nicolaus

therefore

Nicolaus calls to the children to gather around the tree and act out the story he and they had played that morning

therefore

The children call to Karl and Hans to stand by Nicolaus and he starts the story

and

They begin dancing around the tree, acting it out, with Karl and Hans happily clapping (handing out free cookies as the dancers pass)

as the curtain closes

Explanation of Scenario Based On the "Arkansas Traveler":

The "Arkansas Traveler" is such a popular legend in this country that it seems to be an ideal story to be developed into a children's play. The legend offers the opportunity for presenting the frontier Arkansas atmosphere and humor to the child audience. However, the basic story leaves much to be desired; for development of dramatic appeal, it needs a protagonist with a strong desire for something that a child would understand. In addition, the legend demands more action and conflict, leading to a definite climax. With so much to be added, care has to be exercised in not ruining the original flavor of the legend. The problem of maintaining the importance of the tune necessitates the creating of a protagonist, who understands the old man's delight in playing the tune. Therefore, an attractive granddaughter has been developed; the granddaughter has promised to wait for a young man, who has left the area to find his fortune. Conflict is introduced by the insertion of a young neighbor who wants to marry the girl for selfish reasons. Conflict is further aroused by the grandfather's evident favoring of the neighbor. However, the young girl persists in her desire to wait for the boy she prefers. If the playwright can approach the scenario with the definite intent of developing it along humorous lines, the play might satisfactorily be presented before child audiences; however, other approaches might make it more applicable to the junior high school age.

ARKANSAS TRAVELER

Scene opens with Linda Lou coming in from woods with bouquet of flowers, walking dreamily

therefore

Gramps, who is chipping wood on the steps, looks up, asks who's there (he's nearsighted)

and

Linda Lou laughingly replies it's only she, Linda Lou

therefore

Gramps calls to the mother that Linda Lou is home

and

He asks her where she's been

and

She replies that she's been out picking flowers to pretty up the house again

and

He asks her if she's doing this for Zeke

but

She says, "Zeke? Of course not----"

and

The mother comes out of the house and asks what's this about Zeke

therefore

Gramps explains that with the only neighbor boy around for miles coming back with groceries from the city, he can't understand why Linda Lou isn't excited at his coming home today

but

The mother scolds Gramps, telling him it isn't fair to tease Linda Lou with such an excuse for a man as Zeke when he knows she's promised to Hank

but

Gramps interrupts, "Huh, Hank--just like all the other people around--goes out west to look for gold"

but

Linda Lou replies that he'll be back, though

and

Other little children come out of the house to hear the conversation

but

Gramps replies that he doesn't see how Linda Lou can still wait for any man--even Hank Thoreau--after he's been gone two years--when there's a man right within spittin' distance who wants to marry her

but

Linda Lou says, "Would he work hard to support me?" (To each of these questions Gramps tries to say yes--but he realizes he can't). "Does he know how to show a girl a good time?"

but

Mother interrupts, "Yes, Hank can sing--"

and

A boy interrupts, "And play the fiddle, too!"
and
Linda Lou says, "And Hank loves me. Does Zeke like me; or does he want to marry me so he can live off this family?"
and
Mother says, "As if we don't have a hard enough time, since father died, without adding another mouth to feed
but
Gramps exclaims, "Just the same--he's a man--and that's better than pining over one who'll never come back"
and
Linda Lou cries, "Hank is coming back--I know he is!"
and
Mother decides it's time to stop the conversation so she suggests they come inside--lunch is almost ready
but
Everyone but Mother (who goes inside) is interrupted by Zeke who comes in, calling in a whiny way--for Gramps
and
Gramps runs to him, (in a roundabout way--for he can't see him), asking him what is wrong
and
He says he's been chased by a bear for about the last 10 minutes; he knows it was a bear because he heard it growl
and
Everyone laughs when one of the boys comes in and growls like a bear
and
Zeke nearly jumps out of his skin, dropping his bag (with contents)
but
After discovering it is one of the boys, he starts to run after the boy
but
He stops short when the mother comes out to tell everyone to come in and clean up for supper
and
Zeke goes up to her and says he's mighty hungry (with Gramps laughing and saying that's what he likes to see--a man with an appetite)
but
The women glare at Gramps who pays no attention, for he can't see them glaring
but
Two of the children have sneaked up to the bag he's dropped
and
They begin to look in to see what he's brought
and
They call to him to show him what he has
therefore
He importantly walks over to the bag
and

He picks out humorous (to audience) gifts for Mother, children (in a group), Linda Lou, and a fiddle for Gramps

and

Gramps thanks him, making a point of saying no one's ever brought him so nice a gift before

and

Mother says she'll take the groceries in

and

Linda asks him to play one of Hank's tunes

but

Gramps says he can't remember any

therefore

Zeke says he learned a tune in the city

therefore

The children and Gramps beg him to play it

therefore

He sits down, looks hesitatingly around, picks up the bow, and strikes a few terrible squeaks

and

The children laugh louder as the noise becomes unbearable

therefore

Gramps quietly takes the fiddle from Zeke and asks him to sing it

and

He and Zeke humorously work out the first half of the tune together (Zeke halfway singing and Gramps playing)

but

Zeke forgets the last half

and

The children are most disappointed

therefore

Gramps plays it again

but

No one can figure out the ending

therefore

Mother comes to the door, ordering everyone into lunch

and

Gramps says he'll be along after everyone else is washed

and

He signals to Zeke to offer Linda Lou his arm to escort her

but

Linda Lou stomps on ahead of him

and

Gramps is left alone to play his tune

and

He mentions that it's terrible on Zeke's part not to remember the whole tune but it "sure" was nice of him to bring the fiddle to him

but

He is interrupted by Zeke who sneaks out of the house

and

He creeps up to Gramps, motioning to him to be quiet
but
Gramps is puzzled and asks loudly what Zeke wants
therefore
Zeke takes a letter out of his pocket, tells him he was given this letter in the city for the family, and asks Gramps to read it to him
but
Gramps can't read it either (he again shows his nearsightedness--getting too old to read, he guesses)
therefore
They both decide it could be from Hank, for who else writes the family
and
They decide to hide the letter and try to persuade Linda Lou that Hank has forgotten her
but
They are interrupted by Linda Lou who tells them to go inside and eat--that's what they want, anyway--food--
and
They leave, Gramps tucking the letter in his hip pocket
but
He passes the boy (who pretended to be a bear) coming out of the door
and
He reminds him to hurry to lunch
therefore
The boy hurriedly shows Linda Lou he has sneaked some food from the table
and
Linda Lou takes some out of her pockets
and
They talk of how she'll have to hike in the woods today until Zeke leaves--she can't stand to have him around
therefore
She takes the food, thanks him, and goes into the woods
but
Gramps and Zeke (eating food on way) come out, calling for Linda Lou
and
They ask boy where she is
therefore
The boy tells them she's gone for the day until Zeke leaves
and
Zeke says he can't understand her attitude--all he wants to do is marry her and live with the family
and
Gramps says he'd better go find her or she'll get lost in the woods
therefore
Zeke leaves, after taking a sandwich out of Gramps' hands
but

The boy, exclaiming he'll have to take the short cut, runs a little different way--

and the curtain closes

Scene Two

Scene opens with Linda Lou sitting in the woods, singing

and

Brother comes to warn her that Zeke is close by

therefore

He helps her into a tree and hides just in time

and

Zeke walks into the clearing, calling for Linda Lou

and

A humorous scene ensues where he tries to persuade her to come out of hiding

and

He finally declares that he'll sit there until she does appear

therefore

She and boy try all sorts of tricks to scare him

but

He seems determined to stay

and

Just as she is about to relent and climb down, a sound of whistling is heard

and

A traveler appears

therefore

Zeke hides to see who it is

and

The stranger talks of the spot--mentioning it as being one of his favorite hiding away places as a child

but

As he starts to go on, Zeke orders him to stop, demanding to know where he's headed

but

The stranger recognizes him, saying he hasn't changed a bit

but

Zeke is puzzled as to who he is

and

The stranger says he is headed for "Crawford's Center" for the evening

and

Zeke tries to dissuade him, saying there's only one family living there now and they don't welcome young men

and

The conversation establishes the name of the family and the fact that Zeke is planning to marry the daughter

but

The stranger seems startled and he asks if Zeke has received Linda Lou's consent

and

Zeke says that Linda Lou is begging to marry him; he paints such a glowing report that it becomes obvious to the stranger that Zeke is exaggerating (Reactions from Linda Lou and boy during all this)

therefore

The stranger insists on going there

and

Zeke decides he'd better follow

therefore

Boy comes out of hiding

and

He helps Linda Lou down from tree

and

He asks her what they should do now since it looks as if there'll be two men to worry about rather than one

and

Linda agrees

but

She expresses fury at Zeke for telling such tales

therefore

The boy teases her by mimicking Zeke

but

She interrupts by saying that the stranger puzzles her (but neither could get a good look, they were so busy keeping out of sight. Zeke has been moving around stranger, getting a good look)

therefore

They decide it will be funny to see what Gramps says to them, anyway,

and

They decide to go home

and

The curtain closes

Scene Three

The scene opens with Mother wondering where Linda Lou and the boy are

and

Gramps explains proudly that he sent Zeke to protect Linda Lou--throwing in the fact that the boy went into the woods, too

therefore

The mother scolds Gramps for ever encouraging Zeke to come around. He knows Linda Lou is promised to Hank

but

Gramps reminds the mother that they've had no word from Hank for months now--he says that Zeke is a good boy--didn't he bring Gramps a fiddle?

but

The mother tells Gramps she doesn't want to hear of any encouraging of men on Gramps' part any more--that he can just keep out of Linda Lou's business--

and

She goes toward the house, declaring that Gramps and she will have to go search for them if they're not back in a half hour

but

In passing Gramps, she notices the letter in his hip pocket and asks him what he's doing with a letter

and

He haltingly replies it's his

but

She declares he can't see to read anymore--what does it say?

and

He tries to make up a letter--but stammers around

therefore

She demands to see it and he hands it over

and

She goes into the house

therefore

Gramps runs after her, telling her it's not fair to keep the contents from him

but

She turns around and orders him to stay outside and mind his own business

therefore

Gramps sits down, grumbling and playing his tune

but

He is interrupted by Zeke and the traveler

and

Gramps asks Zeke where Linda Lou is

but

The traveler is startled by this question and more so by Zeke's answer that he forgot about her after finding the stranger

therefore

The traveler says they'd better go looking for her

but

Zeke says Linda Lou does this often--she's trying to play coy with him

and

Gramps, at first a bit startled by Zeke's attitude, says yes--that's Linda Lou's way

but

The stranger insists that the woods are dangerous for a young girl and boy--and that it's already late afternoon

therefore

Gramps becomes angry and tells him she's their girl--not the stranger's--let <u>them</u> handle this

and

Zeke retorts they don't like the stranger's ideas on how they should act

therefore

Gramps tells him he's not welcome there

but

The stranger asks if he might stay there overnight

and

Gramps retorts that there's no room for the stranger--with the hole in the roof, they barely can find place to sleep safely as it is

and

He begins to play his tune, ignoring the traveler

therefore

The stranger asks if he could sleep outside in the yard

but

Gramps refuses, by telling him they don't want anyone around (Zeke becoming more pleased with each answer)

and

The traveler asks him if he could perhaps stay overnight if he fixed the roof

but

Gramps says they don't need a good roof unless it rains and rainy season won't start for a month or two

and

He says he's had enough of the stranger's foolishness--that he should go on his way

therefore

The traveler starts to go and Zeke walks pompously around, bragging, "I told you they wouldn't cotton to young men around here."

therefore

The stranger straightens up and returns to Gramps, asking him why he doesn't finish the tune

therefore

The traveler offers to play it for him

and

Gramps says, "Zeke, I can't be mean to a man who can play the tune. Fellow, if you can play this tune, you can stay with us as long as you like!"

but

Zeke grabs the fiddle out of Gramps' hand, saying the traveler can't use it

but

The traveler declares he has his own fiddle to play on and he goes to his bag and takes it out

therefore

He plays the tune and Gramps dances to it--flinging Zeke unhappily around for a partner

but

They are interrupted by Linda Lou and the boy, and Linda Lou recognizes Hank and everyone comes running out to greet him

but

The mother storms out last and, after greeting Hank in surprise, she rushes over to Zeke and declares he has even more nerve than she imagined

therefore

Gramps demands to know what she means

and

She holds up the letter, asking Zeke where he got it

therefore

Zeke stupidly answers, "At the fiddle shop--I said I wanted a fiddle for the Crawfords and he gave this letter to me after handing me the fiddle"

and

The mother retorts, "That's what I thought. This is the bill for the fiddle"

therefore

Gramps picks up a stray log and shouts, "You'll bring me a fiddle and try to make me pay for it, will you?"

and

He chases Zeke off the stage (to Zeke's dismay and to the delight of the rest)

and

The children beg Hank to play the fiddle for them and sing

therefore

The mother makes them get in a circle

and

The curtain closes with Mother, Gramps (who's returned), the boy, and Linda Lou dancing "Ginny reel" or some such dance to the tune

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The science of valid folklore collecting in the United States is still in its infancy. Folklore material is believed, by many people in the children's theatre field, to be unsuitable for use in transference to dramatic form for children's plays, and yet forty-six local legends have been selected that suit the criteria set up for evaluation or suggest ideas that might develop into dramatic possibilities if further research were pursued. With continued effort on the folklorists' part, the wealth of source material in American folklore for children's theatre use, excluding the transference for all types of drama, appears to be infinite.

It was established that there is a need for new children's plays. Although numerous dramas have been compiled into lists of authority-approved plays, the number of plays published has not begun to satisfy the demand. Many dramas already offered by publishing companies have not been approved by directors in the children's theatre movement since they are ineffectively written, possess unlimited production difficulties in their presentation, or fail to meet the criteria for effective children's plays. Letters received from well-known children's theatre leaders emphasized the need for new dramas that would meet the standards established for child audiences.

Winifred Ward's division of subject matter for suitable children's plays was reviewed. The term, American folklore, is not listed and the folk-and fairy-tale classification denotes the traditional European and Asiatic stories which have been sifted and developed to suit the child audience. However, the value of transmitting valid American traditions to the children of today is believed to be inestimable. Since the origin of the traditional story is similar to that of American folklore, it has become apparent that research in this field might reveal important dramatic material for children and could be considered a branch of study from Miss Ward's folk-and fairy-tale division. From a study of the types of folklore prevalent in the world, local legends seem to have the most native qualities and to be most adaptable for dramatic use in children's theatre. Letters from various authorities expressed an interest in furthering a study of local legends in the belief that the legends would provide valuable background and entertainment for every American child.

In general, the criteria to be met in a children's play are similar to those of an adult's play. However, certain principles need more emphasis in a children's play. A list of criteria for the selection of local legends for possible child dramas was developed:

1. The local legend must have universal appeal--some underlying theme that will appeal to the child's mind and desires.

2. The story must have action, being able to move steadily to a definite climax.

3. The plot must be simple; however, there must be conflict within the story in order to create interest in the characters.

4. The story should have humorous connotations within it, or be capable of comic addition, without destroying the original quality of the legend.

5. The story must have or suggest a character with whom children can identify themselves.

6. The characters in the story must have human qualities.

7. The story must have or be capable of changing to a happy ending--where right wins logically.

In addition, the main purpose of entertainment for any audience was stressed.

In the process of choosing local legends that would lend themselves to dramatic form, the definition of the local legend has had to be kept clearly in mind, in order to sort out the legend from other types of folklore. Many of the folklore books that were read contained a mixture of undefined types of lore. The local legend describes an experience, a personality, or a place according to the understanding of the regional teller. For the purpose of this study such varying degrees of the legend as the migratory legend and the "Indian" legend were accepted. Any tale, collected by a folklorist, that develops to a logical conclusion and is believed by the storyteller to be fact about a person, incident, or place in his area was accepted as a local legend.

Concern was expressed as to the difficulty of finding universal appeal in the local legend. However, one leader in the children's theatre field has said that plays based on local history appear to be interesting to all child audiences and not, as believed by some authorities, by just the local audience involved.

The suggestion was made that the forty-six chosen local legends might be developed into children's plays; according to the dramatist's treatment of the legends, his plays might be dramatizations, adaptations, based upon or suggested by the basic legend. To illustrate the means by which basic legends can be utilized for drama, three scenarios were written from three of the suggested local legends in the study: "The Blue Bonnet," "The Baker's Dozen," and "The Arkansas Traveler." Preceding each scenario was an explanation of the problems presented by the individual legend. Marian Gallaway's analysis on course of action of any play was adopted, connecting each new development by AND, BUT, and THEREFORE.

From a merely introductory study of American folklore, specifically local legends, potential dramatic material seems to be available to the playwright. Considering the fact that the selections were determined by certain criteria for children's theatre, and examining the discovery of forty-six potential stories for dramatic development, there appears to be value in suggesting further pursuit of material in other types of folklore: the Märchen or exaggerated tale, the folk song and ballad, riddles and nursery rhymes, humorous anecdotes, and the proverb. Valid folklore collecting, as well as children's theatre, is a relatively new field in this country; research into the transference of American folklore to the arts has unlimited possibilities.

There is much in American folklore that is not suitable for children's plays. Care has to be exercised in the selection of the

local legends; however, with diligent checking against the established criteria the process promises satisfactory results. Many suggested legends are only summaries presented by the folklorist; further research can be made by the playwright by merely investigating the sources.

During the accumulation of the local legends it became apparent that there are additional special studies which can be pursued for children's theatre research:

1. A comprehensive study should be made to determine methods by which source material can be analyzed for its suitability for dramatic use in children's plays.

2. Studies can be pursued in all other fields of American folklore.

3. Special studies can be pursued on:

   (a) Indian tribal tales
   (b) Negro folklore
   (c) Immigrant personalities developed in American folklore--Pat and Mike, etc.

4. Similar studies can be pursued into any other branch of literature or on folklore popular in other countries and continents.

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Association of Junior Leagues, The Waldorf, New York City.
The Children's Theatre Press, Cloverlot, Anchorage, Kentucky.
Coach House Press, Inc., 53 West Jackson, Chicago 4, Illinois.
Dramatic Publishing Company, 1706 S. Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.
Dramatists Play Service, 14 E. 38th Street, New York City.
Samuel French, 25 W. 45th Street, New York City.
Harcourt-Brace & Company (Coll. First Performance), 383 Madison Avenue, New York City.
Row Peterson Company, Evanston, Illinois.

Unpublished Material

Adams, Richard, personal letter, February 22, 1956.

Baker, Maxine Anglin, personal letter, March 14, 1956.

Busfield, Roger M., "Problems of Adaptation and Dramatization." Unpublished paper.

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Graham, Kenneth L. "An Introductory Study of Evaluation of Plays for Children's Theatre in the United States." Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of Utah, 1947. 330 pp.

_____, personal letter, January 4, 1956.

Harris, Aurand, personal letter, December 24, 1955.

Kozelka, Paul, Report on Interview with Miss Esme Church, March 1, 1956, Mimeographed director's mid-year memo to Children's Theatre Conference. 3 pp.

Matlack, Anne, personal letter, December 27, 1955.

Siks, Geraldine Brain, personal letter, January 9, 1956.

Spencer, Sara, personal letter, December 1955.

Watkins, Mary Jane, "The Writing and Production of a Children's Play Based Upon Thackeray's The Rose and The Ring," Michigan State University Master of Arts Thesis, Department of Speech, 1955. 136 pp.

Ward, Winifred, personal letter, January 29, 1956.

APPENDIX

FOLKLORE BOOKS WITH LEGENDS

Allsopp, Fred W. Folklore of Romantic Arkansas. New York: The Grolier Society, 2 volumes, 1931.
Two volumes of folklore collected in Arkansas, including local legends.

The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1952. Vol. I, 712 pp.
Volume I of a three volume collection, compiled by a group of folklorists following the death of Frank C. Brown. Mr. Brown had amassed a huge amount of information and stories from North Carolina during his professorial years at Duke University. One section of Volume I is devoted to very short local legends.

Dobie, J. Frank, ed. Coronado's Children. Dallas, Texas: The Southwest Press, 1930. 367 pp.
A publication in which Mr. Dobie presents the varied treasure legends of Texas, from Coronado's time to today.

_____. Legends of Texas. Austin, Texas: Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, Number 3, 1924. 279 pp.
A publication of the Texas Folklore Society which is now out of print. The major part of the book has been transferred to a more recent edition of Texas Folk and Folklore by Boatright and Dobie.

Dorson, Richard M. Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952. 305 pp.
A collection of recorded tales and ideas of the Northern Michigan folk of today, including local legends.

_____. Jonathan Draws the Long Bow. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1946. 274 pp.
A collection of the printed folklore of New England, with references and explanations of the original printed sources. This book includes local legends.

_____. Negro Folktales in Michigan. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956. 245 pp.
A collection of the folklore of one Michigan county, with an analysis of the tales and ideas of the Negroes in a northern United States region. This book includes local legends.

Federal writers' project. Idaho lore; Vardis Fisher, state director. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton printers, ltd., 1939. 256 pp.
A collection, not entirely authentic, of Idaho lore, transcribed by members of the Federal writers' project. This book includes local legends.

Gardner, Emelyn. Folk Lore from the Schoharie Hills, New York. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1937. 351 pp.
An excellent account of folk located in a region south of Albany, N. Y., including local legends.

Hazard, Thomas Benjamin. The Jonny-Cake Papers of "Shepherd Tom." Boston: Printed for the Subscribers, 1915. 529 pp.
Journalistic descriptions of life in Narragansett County, Rhode Island, in the middle 1800's.

Hendricks, W. C., ed. A Bundle of Troubles and Other Tar Heel Tales. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1943. 206 pp.
A collection of southern tales, including local legends.

Korson, George G. Pennsylvania Songs and Legends. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949. 474 pp.
Some legends of Pennsylvania folk are included in this collection; it is mainly devoted to the folksong.

Masterson, James R., ed. Tall Tales from Arkansaw. Boston: Chapman, 1943. 443 pp.
Some local legends are included in this collection of lore from Arkansas.

Neely, Charles W. Tales and Songs of Southern Illinois. Menasha, Wisc.: George Banta Publishing Company, 1938. 270 pp.
A thorough collection of one section of Illinois--that called Egypt by its natives. It includes some local legends.

Randolph, Vance. The Devil's Pretty Daughter and Other Ozark Folk Tales. New York: Columbia University Press, 1955. 239 pp.
One of many collections written by a man who has spent the major part of his life in the Ozarks, in an attempt to become acquainted with the folk ways. The tales are changed somewhat--not literally transcribed--but the flavor of the lore is still retained.

_____. Who Blowed Up the Church House? New York: Columbia University Press, 1952. 232 pp.
Another collection of Ozark tales written by this Ozark dweller.

Roberts, Leonard W. South from Hell-fer-Sartin (Kentucky Mountain Folk Tales). Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 1955. 287 pp.

A collection, by a Kentuckian folklore authority who has recorded tales in the Kentucky Mountains. This book includes local legends.

Skinner, Charles. Myths and Legends of our Own Land. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1925. Vol. I.

Volume I of a two volume series. This collection is not entirely authentic, but many of the legends and tales have been traced by later folklorists and found to be valid.

Thompson, Harold W. Body, Boots, and Britches. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1940. 521 pp.

A collection of New York State lore, including numerous local legends.

BIOGRAPHY

Miss Mary R. Braithwaite was born in Avenel, New Jersey, and received her first five years of schooling there. The remainder of her public school education was acquired at Ripley Central School, Ripley, New York.

Following high school Miss Braithwaite attended one year at New York State College for Teachers, Albany, New York. She transferred to Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan, receiving her B. A. degree and Michigan Provisional Secondary Teachers' Certificate.

After graduation from Kalamazoo College Miss Braithwaite taught high school English for seven years: one year at Linden, Michigan; three, at Westfield, New York; two, in Lansing, Michigan; and one year in the Munich American High School, Munich, Germany. During the years in Linden and Westfield, Miss Braithwaite was in charge of the school dramatic groups.

One summer's graduate study was spent at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. While teaching in Lansing, Michigan, part of her graduate courses were taken at Michigan State University.

Miss Braithwaite's last year at Michigan State University was spent as a graduate assistant in the children's theatre, assisting in the production of plays for children and serving as one of the advisers and directors of the Toyshop Theatre.